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# TORY TACTICS AND THE VOTER

"THERE are letters which are written, not in genuine hopes of a favourable answer, but simply 'for the record.'" Mr. Churchill's letter of May 18th to the Leader of the Labour Party was one of them. The Prime Minister could hardly have expected that Mr. Attlee would agree to prolong the Coalition, with its stultifying compromises in every field of domestic policy, for a period so indefinite as the duration of hostilities with Japan; nor did he justify his curious suggestion of a referendum on the desirability of prolonging the life of a Parliament whose longevity he had himself described as a "very serious constitutional lapse." Mr. Churchill was simply endeavouring to saddle the Labour Party with responsibility for forcing an immediate election. His perfunctory offer of an extension of Coalition on terms which he knew would be declined masked his own surrender to the Conservative Central Office.

It has for some time been an open secret that, since his appointment as unofficial "Generalissimo" of the Tories' electoral campaign, Lord Beaverbrook (seconded ably by Mr. Brendan Bracken) has been pressing the Prime Minister to agree to a "snap" election as soon as possible after the end of the European war. The calculations of the Central Office were that, by the autumn, curtailment of war production would have led to unemployment; that the question "Where are the houses?" would be asked with embarrassing insistency; and that the one chance of averting an electoral land-slide to the Left would be to cash in immediately on Mr. Churchill's prestige as the architect of victory. The Prime Minister is believed to have had serious misgivings as to the propriety of using his position, as head of a National Coalition, to decree a "rush" election on an admittedly imperfect register, and at the cost of denying to voters—above all, those in the Services—adequate opportunity to study coolly the issues at home and abroad with which the next Parliament will have to deal. But, whatever scruples he may have felt, Mr. Churchill has successfully overcome them: Lord Beaverbrook and the Party wire-pullers have had their way.

The result of the polling will turn on the electorate's ability to appraise the sincerity of Tory promises or, rather, Tory ability to implement them if a non-Socialist economy in this country is maintained. What Lord Beaverbrook and Mr. Bracken want is clear. Their objective is the most rapid possible reversion to conditions in which money can be made. But that is not an aim which can be crudely presented to the electors. The Twelve-Point Statement of Policy issued by the Conservative Central Office last Saturday begins by demanding support for Mr. Churchill, a powerful Britain, and vigorous Empire development. It then calls for "the fullest opportunity for individual initiative and the removal of War-time Controls." But it ends, significantly, by promising pretty much the same sort of boons as the Labour Party promises—full employment, higher standards of living, efficient industrial plant, prosperous agriculture, more and better houses, social security and "equal opportunities" in education.

Will the electorate in sufficient numbers realise that these promised blessings are completely incompatible with the free field for unplanned, uncontrolled individual enterprise which the Tory statement puts in front of them? That is the real issue in this election; and, if they are wise, the progressive parties will concentrate on it. They will have to cope with distractions in plenty staged by their opponents. In the domestic field every effort will be made to discredit "planning" by drawing false analogies with authoritarian regimes and by exploiting the natural unpopularity of war-time regimentation and "form-filling." Efforts, too, will doubtless be made to misrepresent Labour as standing for a disarmed and helpless Britain, and to trade on Churchill as the one man "big enough to stand up for British rights."

How far the electorate will be confused by these red herrings we have no ability to guess. Unhappily there is no time now to do much to secure electoral unity of the progressive forces, notwithstanding the narrow margin by which "reference back" on this issue was defeated at Blackpool. In triangular contests the Tories may retain a number of seats which a Progressive might have won in a straight fight. But of one thing we are certain. The situation which confronts this country, and which will have to be settled either at this or a subsequent election, is whether we are to drift into the economic stagnation which is now the certain result of an obsolescent system by which public needs are subordinated to private profit, or whether Britain can summon up enough energy and collective purposefulness to adjust for the purposes of peace the conscious mobilisation of resources which gave us victory in war. If Labour conducts its campaign in the forthright spirit which both delegates and leaders have shown during the Conference, this will do much to create public confidence in the Party's ability successfully to meet this problem. Mr. Bevin, particularly, made a strong impression with his speech on Labour's international policy, and, like the other Labour ex-Ministers, seems to show a welcome understanding that Socialism or slow decay are the real alternatives for the electorate's choice.

### How Many Germanies?

To the accompaniment of a confusing chorus of voices of "military spokesmen," things are moving in occupied Germany; but it is not yet clear that they are moving on lines of united inter-Allied policy. The equivocal position of the Flensburg "Government" has at last been cleared up. An Anglo-American "Control Party" has gone to Flensburg to take charge; now that Dönitz and his staff have served Allied needs in administering the disarmament and collection of the inchoate mass of troops covered by the capitulation, they have rightly been relieved of all authority. It has also been explained that enemy forces which fell into our hands after the surrender are regarded not as prisoners of war but as "disarmed persons" to whom the provisions of the Geneva Convention do not apply. There is, however, no sign yet when the trials of war criminals are to begin, or by what judicial machinery they are to be conducted. Nor can we

yet be sure that the projected Tripartite (or Quadripartite) Control Commission for the central administration of the Reich will ever take shape. Field-Marshal Montgomery—an admirable commander in battle, but without any experience of political problems—has been appointed British member of the Commission as well as Military Chief of the British occupied zone. The spokesman at 2nd British Army H.Q. who announced the forthcoming "decentralisation" of Germany has been disavowed, but *de facto* partition is what will occur unless an inter-Allied Commission takes charge at the centre and effectively co-ordinates policy in the various zones.

### East of the Elbe

With Berlin still closed to Anglo-American correspondents, little is known yet of the means taken by the Russians to purge Germany of "Hitlerites." (The majority of the surviving Nazi leaders are, of course, in the British and American zones.) But it is already evident that Russian policy is to win favour with what *Pravda* now calls "the peaceful population of Germany." There are reports of large-scale deportations of males of military age; but some German rations have been increased, coffee distributed, and milk supplies organised. Even in shattered Berlin cinemas and theatres are being re-opened and a deliberate effort is being made to mobilise artists and writers and to get cultural activities started again. This is an odd sequel to Anglo-American fears lest we should be accused by Moscow of lack of "toughness"; but S.H.A.E.F. apparently is still bound by the directive—"do nothing to rehabilitate Germany." General Draper, head of S.H.A.E.F.'S public health branch, has warned that food supplies in the British and U.S. zones will be exhausted in 60 days, unless the Russians release grain from their zone—an arrangement to which Moscow has not yet consented. The consequences will be dangerous for all the Allies if a glaring contrast develops between renaissence in the Russian zone and decrepitude, with neither work nor food, in the Anglo-American area.

### Negotiations on Trieste

Marshal Tito, whose latest broadcast from Belgrade was studiously moderate in its reference to the Western Allies, seems very sensibly to have decided not to force the pace in Istria. It was surely neither wise nor fair of Field-Marshal Alexander to accuse the Yugoslavs of aping the totalitarian tactics of Hitler; the real and sufficiently damaging comparison is with the Italians at Fiume and the Poles at Vilna after the last war. Tito, however, was doubtless impressed by the evidence that the British and U.S. Governments were determined, even if it meant recourse to armed force, to establish in Istria the authority of Allied Military Government; and we suspect that the Allies backed their Notes with the threat of withholding all relief supplies if the Yugoslavs were intransigeant. The upshot now seems likely to be an agreement to keep the eventual disposal of Trieste and its hinterland in "cold storage," to garrison the disputed area meanwhile with a mixed British and Yugoslav force under Alexander's command, and to add a Yugoslav General to the Field-Marshal's staff. There appears, however, to be one stipulation by Tito which the Allies find difficulty in accepting. He is insisting that Allied Military Government must work through the "civilian authorities already established." These are presumably those installed by the Yugoslav National Liberation forces. Their attitude towards the Italian minority has, so far, been harsh; and, if their relations with Allied Military Government, were not harmonious, the utilisation of Trieste as a supply-port might be seriously compromised.

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### What Next in Italy?

These should be the last days of the Bonomi Government. Already under an obligation to resign once Northern Italy was liberated, the Cabinet has been given a final push by Togliatti, the Communist Minister, who has called for its early resignation. Some delay is likely, however, before a new Government can be formed. The amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Committees of National Liberation must be completed, and there may be further negotiations with the Socialists, who have remained outside the present Cabinet. Their inclusion is essential now the radical industrial centres are free and demanding increased representation for the Left in the Government. The Communists have now agreed not to take office again without Socialist participation in the Cabinet. The Allied ban on political meetings in Milan is indicative of a tension which can only be relaxed by the formation of a new and more representative administration. It is suggested that a Consultative Assembly may soon be created, composed of nominees of the political parties and other recognised organisations besides a number of deputies from the last democratic Parliament. This would do a great deal to provide some semblance of national authority to any new Government. So far, the successive Cabinets since 1943 have existed mainly by the grace of the Allies. Presumably the new Government will be expected to sign a peace treaty with the Allies. The present position is anomalous. Allied firms are prevented from doing business with Italy under the Trading with the Enemy regulations, and there is said to be strong American pressure for an early settlement. On the other hand, though decisions have probably been taken to truncate the Italian Empire, the status of certain disputed frontier areas in Europe is still as vague as the economic prospects which face Italy. The creation of a strong Italian Government seems the first step towards stability and rehabilitation.

### Belgian Crisis

M. van Acker's broadcast, like the drastic new measures he announced, underlines the gravity of Belgium's economic crisis. Reserves of food and fuel are almost exhausted. A general strike would not merely paralyse the country and disrupt the Cabinet's attempt to cope with the black market and the rising cost of living; it might provoke an Allied embargo on food imports without which famine might rapidly ensue. The strike wave—which he attributed mainly to the "mendacious propaganda" of unspecified agitators—has already interfered with economic rehabilitation. Though the Belgian press claims that Trotskyist activity has been responsible for a number of local and unofficial stoppages, the miners' trade union had itself issued a strike notice which has only been withdrawn pending negotiations with the Government. Many strikes and much of the general unrest are due to the unsettled and confused situation which is the direct legacy of the inadequacies of the Pierlot Government. As M. van Acker's Government includes both Socialists and Communists, it cannot intend to run foul of the trade unions. Presumably it is felt that the vicious circle of inflation and economic disorganisation must be broken somewhere, and it says much for its resolution if the Cabinet is prepared to place drastic restrictions on its own supporters.

### Reaction in Holland

Liberated Holland has been saved from the utter starvation which threatened her. But not for the first time her democratic parties are facing what looks like a scheme to undermine their traditional rights of representation. A royal decree dated April 12th has now been published, which proposes to set up over all the towns and villages of Holland Councils nominated by the Royal Government. This is wholly unnecessary, [illegible] elections could easily be held on the basis [illegible] identity or ration cards. What was done [illegible] France could be done in Holland. The ground for suspicion is that Dr. Gerbrandy's Government, which recently lost its three Socialist Ministers by resignation, is unrepresentative, and is felt to be dominated by the big Anglo-Dutch Trusts. This scheme was first launched a year ago, and was exposed at the time in our columns. It seemed to have been dropped, but here it is again. The reactionaries are trading on the fatigue of the people after the nightmare of the German occupation. But such cities as Amsterdam have shown great powers of resistance: it is unlikely that they will now acquiesce. The ugliest part of this threat to Dutch democracy is that the financial magnates of the Right have close connections with British Big Business.

### The Syrian Complication

The Arab temperament is inflammable, and it was unfortunate that General de Gaulle should have insisted on sending some troops aboard a cruiser to Syria, while negotiations were pending with that country and the Lebanon. The number is small, and they are mainly replacements, not reinforcements. But the Syrians see in this movement a gesture of coercion and are reacting, as also are the Lebanese, with demonstrations of indignation, which have included some rioting. This step was taken against British advice. Our position would have been clearer had we not ourselves retained a Division in Syria. The French are unwilling to withdraw their forces until they have reached an agreement with their former wards as to the privilege they are still to enjoy after relinquishing their mandate. They can point as a precedent to the rights which we reserved for ourselves in similar circumstances in Irak. They have at stake cultural traditions centred in their colleges, economic interests and also a claim to the use of naval ports and airfields and to station troops on Syrian territory. This, the Syrians feel, is not the "independence" they were promised; but the status of Egypt and Irak is subject to the same conditions, nor have our relations with these two protégés always been happy in the past. The French are indisposed to accept our mediation, because they suspected some of our agents on the spot of hostility—in the case of General Spears with good reason. The League of Arab States may possibly take some action and the Russians have also displayed their interest in this complication. It is not easy to see a way out, until the Big Three, with General de Gaulle as the fourth, succeed in creating a healthier atmosphere at the upper levels.

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### PARLIAMENT: Telling the World?

An important subject—continuation or curtailment of the B.B.C. foreign broadcasts—had to be raised in a way which merely allowed the expression of opinion, in the thin House present at the Whitsun adjournment debate. It was raised by Kenneth Lindsay; a number of Members from all sides supported his views that there should be no cutting down of the foreign-language broadcasts or of the work of such bodies as the British Council and the British Information Services in America.

Major Mott-Radclyffe wanted the "projection of our way of life . . . canalised under one main authority so that it will operate at its fullest strength." Creech Jones voiced the resentment felt by the British Council at the withholding from it of the Findlater Stewart report on its work. Walter Elliot excited fervent hear-hears (and an interruption *à la polonaise* by Captain McEwen) when he condemned the Flensburg radio and the ill-effect that our treatment of Dönitz was having on opinion in Russia. The minor Governmental spokesmen, Thurtle and Geoffrey Hall, skimmed the topic semi-convincingly, passing half-bricks to each other whenever prodded.

It has been reported that there was a "crowd

se" for the debate on demobilisation—or, as Government significantly prefer to call it, re-ation. This is not so. An informal approximate nt, taken several times during Bevin's long and prehensive opening speech, showed an average of Tories, seventy Socialists, and a dozen others. doubt the debate was depleted by, and never vered from, the curious arrangement of allowing beral National to initiate it. Bevin spoke humanely the Unknown Man."

We concern ourselves with the man who writes us, or the man who goes to the local parson or mebody else to get hold of us, but he represents very small minority. The great upheavals arly always come about when people of whom u have never heard get "fed-up" . . . The n I always respect . . . is the man who never es to "pull the wires" . . . It is that body of n who, if this thing goes wrong, will mutiny will upset things. . .

rtainly Bevin is rigidly opposed to any wire-ing. Class B releases will be few, and will be ly subject to direction, under pain of return to Forces until the normal demobilisation group comes round. Releases under Classes A and B total 750,000 by the end of the year. Mean loyers are not to take a man's 56 days' discharge pay into account when fixing wages. The issue of preference in jobs for ex-Servicemen (raised by the British Legion spokesman, Sir Ian Fraser) was faced squarely: "if I could limit this to those who have been at the fighting front, I would not argue about it"; but, although there is to be a special mark on an ex-Serviceman's card, an "absolute direction to the officials to do this in all circumstances is carrying matters a bit too far in the light of all the other things"; and, in any case, "it is not the employment exchange which determines the issue—it is the employers."

Wing-Commander Millington, the new Common Wealth M.P. for Chelmsford, in his maiden speech, staunchly repudiated any desire on the part of serving men for preferential treatment. A policy for full employment was more important. After further speeches, Fraser—who might have divided the House—said: ". . . I have it in mind to postpone this battle until 100 ex-Servicemen belonging to all parties have come into this House in the next Parliament."

As a pendant to this debate, Grigg gave an unsympathetic, indeed rough-edged, reply to George Strauss's plea for the taking into account, for demobilisation purposes, of previous service in Allied armies by soldiers transferred to the British Army.

PONTIFEX MINOR

# RUSSIA AND POLAND

my cables from America during the last e weeks I tried to weigh the impact of sia's tortuous diplomacy on public opinion, at same time pointing out that it must be seen he perspective of the general division of the d into spheres of influence. I also recalled on other occasions on which we have rightly exasperated by Soviet methods, we later found that the Russians had grounds their actions which for some mysterious on they never stated until the maximum age had been done by their secrecy. Last , cabling from New York, I quoted Walter mann's suggestion that all the documents on Polish issue should be printed in full.

he U.S.S.R. have handled their case with abysmal carelessness of foreign opinion that he repressed hatred of the U.S.S.R. has been sed from the restraints imposed by our alli- during the war, while much of the friend- built up for the Soviet Union has been ed or alienated. Yet we all know that the e peace of the world, and in particular the rity of this country, depend more on main- g good relations with Russia than on any r factor. In the present impasse, sanity is to be found in ridding ourselves as far as ible of emotion and attempting to state the as objectively as possible.

he British public has been very naturally sed by the news that sixteen Poles, amongst m were some starred by the British Govern- t as candidates for the reorganised Polish ernment, had been arrested. I can conceive o good reason why the Soviet Government ld not have informed the Allied Commission Moscow, set up after Yalta, that these arrests taken place. If the Russians had at once d that, for political reasons, these men were gible for inclusion in the projected Polish ernment, and had not carried out unilateral assions while the Allied Commission kicked eels in Moscow, most of the subsequent evils ld have been avoided. The result of the et secrecy has been to give Russia's bitterest mies in London and America the opportunity propaganda whose object—let us have no ions in the matter—is to provoke war against U.S.S.R. The London Poles openly talk t a third world war, which they expect within y short time.

he facts, I hear from an authoritative source, as follows. On March 23rd the Soviet rity Service arrested somewhere on Polish tory, probably at Cracow, General Okulicki his staff, and also the delegate of the Polish Government in London, M. Jankowski. Neither of these men took part in any subsequent negotiations. They have been in prison throughout and presumably await trial. Of M. Jankowski I know little. General Okulicki's career, on the other hand, is well known. He was a close associate of General Anders; he is a typical Polish officer whose entire outlook and record is bitterly anti-Russian, and he belonged to that section of the Polish underground movement which, without any doubt, organised acts of sabotage, and fought by all means in their power, against the Red Army. He was in the U.S.S.R. with General Anders, but in July, 1944, was dropped by parachute into Poland, against the wishes of Mikolajczyck, who was then Prime Minister. He became Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the underground army, and after the capture of General Bor, succeeded him. It is highly significant that Mikolajczyck refused to make him General Bor's successor, and that he was only appointed to that post after Mikolajczyck's resignation.

The case of the other fourteen members of the underground movement stands on quite a different footing. On March 28th they came into the open and declared themselves to the Soviet authorities. They were invited to Moscow—the London Poles say that they were offered a safe conduct—and for fourteen days they discussed the future of Poland with representatives of the Soviet Union. The peasant leader, Wincenty Witos, joined them a few days later in Moscow at the invitation of the Soviet Union. Discussions broke down mainly on the question of their acceptance of the proposed eastern frontiers of Poland. Witos was permitted to return to his friends, but the Soviet authorities, fearing presumably that the fourteen members of the underground movement would organise against the Red Army, arrested them without informing either London or Washington of the discussions or of the arrests. These methods seem inexcusable.

It is certain that the Soviet authorities have a strong case against some of these men. The well-informed correspondent in the *Observer*, who is well-disposed towards the Poles, wrote on May 20th:

> That some Poles have engaged in sabotaging the Red Army can be taken for granted. It is known that the so-called National Armed Forces, which ought not to be confused with the Polish Home Army, consisted of Fascist and fanatically anti-Russian elements. They specialised in attacking isolated groups of Soviet soldiers as well as in assassinating Polish politicians of liberal and Left-wing tendencies. These National Armed Forces had, incidentally, been outlawed by the Mikolajczyck Government, as the *Observer* reported at the time. They had also been expelled from the Home Army. . . .
>
> It is quite likely that among the sixteen defendants there may be one or two people connected with the terrorists of the National Armed Forces whose guilt the Russian prosecutor may be able to prove; and that, having achieved this, he will proceed to charge the guilty and the innocent, the reckless anti-Russian adventurers and the conciliatory and respectable Polish politicians alike. Marshal Stalin in his statement, at any rate, treats all the sixteen Poles "as one lot."

To this I have two things to add. First, we have as yet no knowledge that these Poles are to be treated "as one lot," or even that they are all to be tried; secondly, that the *Observer's* correspondent does not tell the whole truth when he separates the National Armed Forces, admittedly a Fascist section of the underground Poles, from the Polish Home Army. They were separate for administration reasons until March, 1944. At the end of March the National Armed Forces were formally incorporated in the Polish Home Army, and on April 7th the Commander of the Army published an Order of the Day announcing that they were subordinate to his command. General Sosnkowski also transmitted his greetings in a telegram addressed to the National Armed Forces. It is therefore natural, but disingenuous, on Mikolajczyck's part to suggest that during the last twelve months acts of sabotage carried out by the underground forces of Poland must be attributed solely to the National Armed Forces and not to the Home Army. The two had become inseparable; and if General Bor, who is now in London and who appears to be an honest soldier, could be candid on the matter, he would admit that the Commander of the Novogrodek area of the Home Army actively collaborated with the Germans. General Bor himself tried to have this officer punished, but was prevented, presumably by friends of Sosnkowski.

If the trial takes place, the Russians will have abundant evidence against some at least of the accused; and if Stalin cares to make use of all the information at his disposal, he can expose to the whole world the intrigues of the London Poles. He has, we may assume, all the Orders of the Day, issued mainly by radio from London, to the Polish underground movement. They will be found to include instructions to act against the Red Army and against the interests of the Allies. But it probably never enters the heads of the Russian authorities, in their crass ignorance of this country, that orders that came from London, which was the headquarters of the Polish resistance movement, may not have been approved or known by everyone in the British Foreign Office, War Office and the British Government. If the Russians had that political wisdom which they at present show no signs of possessing, they would publish all this material about the London Poles in a White Paper, which could be checked up here by those with access to the records. If the Russian case is kept in cold storage until a mass trial, and then brought out in the form of confessions which will be widely discounted, once again Soviet methods will have completely stultified the objects of Soviet policy.

It may not yet be too late to retrieve the situation. In a letter sent to the correspondent of *The Times*, Stalin states that the arrest of these Poles had nothing to do with the negotiations for the reorganisation of the Polish Government. This may be formally true, since these negotiations were not part of official discussions with the British and Americans. But in the minds of the British and American public the two sets of negotiations cannot be dissociated, since some of the arrested men were mentioned by us, rightly or wrongly, as eligible members of the broadened Polish Government. Stalin still holds out hopes that the Yalta agreement will be honoured. His interpretation of that agreement, which makes Lublin the kernel of the new government, seems correct. But if he now sin-

cerely hopes for a Polish settlement which is not unilateral but which conforms to the Yalta formula—whose essence was that the new Polish Government should be formed by agreement of the three Powers with the Poles—he must take steps to re-establish confidence.

Stalin's first step should be to publish in full his case against the London Poles and against the arrested General and members of the underground movement. Secondly, the path of political wisdom would be for Stalin to release all those Poles who have not beyond doubt committed definite acts of sabotage which can be proved in the eyes of the foreign world as well as in the eyes of the Russian public. It would be wise to do so, even if the Soviet Union sincerely believes that it has a case against them. At the same time the Russians should themselves put forward the names of some members of the parties in Poland, and of Poles outside Poland, who could in their view be legitimately added to the Lublin Government, in order that a broadened administration could be formed on the lines suggested at Yalta. Simultaneously the British should publish a White Paper with all the documents on the Polish negotiations.

Stalin still talks of a *cordon sanitaire* against Russia. If he has in mind recent incidents, such as the Soviet capture of incriminating documents in Bucharest which show that intrigues against the Soviet Union continue in high Allied quarters, why does he not speak openly about them? It is of course possible that he has already decided to close Eastern Europe totally to the Western Allies. In that case the world would be confronted with the tragic situation in which two great power blocs would exist side by side with no machinery of collaboration except such a formal document as may emerge from San Francisco and the still existing arrangement by which the Foreign Ministers are to see each other at quarterly meetings.

Nevertheless, I am by no means yet convinced that this is a final Russian decision, and Stalin's letter to *The Times* correspondent and Russia's continued participation in San Francisco give rise to the hope that co-operation is still possible. In that case the essential need is to persuade the Russians to abandon the secrecy in which they surround their operations. How can we make them understand that, while there are elements in America and Britain which are irreconcilably opposed to the Soviet Union, there are others, still far more powerful, which earnestly desire their friendship and collaboration? The Russians apparently have no conception of how important public opinion is in the West; they make the mistake of judging us purely in terms of military power, not realising that whether democracies act militarily or not depends, not on the views of American Service Chiefs who want to fortify islands against Russia, or on British officials who want to intrigue against the U.S.S.R. in the Balkans, but on the liberal-minded persons who form the great mass of the public. Their desire is to co-operate with the Soviet Union, but they will certainly turn against it if the Russians behave without regard for that system of morality and good faith which, in spite of our shortcomings, still has dynamic force in Western civilisation.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

# WHAT NEXT IN INDIA AND BURMA?

HALF the affairs of Europe are in flux and we ourselves are on the eve of a General Election, yet we make no apology for drawing attention to the outlook in India and Burma. Heavy though our share of responsibility may be for the future of Germany and in a lesser degree for that of Poland, India and Burma are our concern and legally, if not morally, they are our concern alone.

The proposals of the India Office for Burma are now before us. It is laid down in the White Paper that Burma is to be administered autocratically by the decrees of its Governor for a period of three years, though it is provided that he may "liberalise" this bureaucratic system by associating Burmese civil servants with himself in his council and eventually, perhaps, some non-official Burmans. At the end of this interim period, the limited self-government granted in the Act of 1935 (similar to that of an Indian Province) will be restored: elections will be held and the chosen Burmese Government will then proceed to draw up the constitution of the future Dominion, which Parliament will enact by legislation, if due account is taken of our interests.

The first obvious comment on this plan is that the interim period of three years is much too long. The ruin of the towns and communications is extensive, while the Japanese have shattered Burma's economic life by flooding the country with their "occupation" notes. To this confusion our hasty and inconsiderate decree, which turns the whole of this immense issue of rupees into waste paper, has added a complication, which must impoverish and antagonise the peasantry. Some brief interim period there must be. But the significance of this lengthy period of three years is clearly that the new lines of Burma's economic structure are to be laid by a British Governor acting with the help of official advisers responsible to no organised body of Burmese opinion.

Behind this political scheme lies the fact that the economic life of Burma was built on a typical colonial pattern. The resources of this potentially wealthy Dependency were exploited mainly by capital and agencies from overseas—British in the top layer, Indian and Chinese on the lower levels. An immense surplus of exports over imports revealed the steady drain of the country's wealth. However illusory was the "independence" established by the Japanese, at least it interrupted this process. Will it be the central purpose of a British Governor to reorganise it again? Meanwhile, the younger generation of Burmans, who have received a Western education, has been doing some planning. It has its schemes of land reform and industrial development, in which it is proposed to use the State, co-operative societies and public utility agencies in ways that should protect the peasants from exploitation and retain a higher proportion of the country's income for its own use and development. Some clearing up of the chaos of the battlefield must be done at once. But we would urge that the creative work of reconstruction and the choice of a new economic pattern must be left to Burmans chosen by their own people. The interim period should end within a year, in a general election and a return to responsible self-government.

In the case of India, the oracle is silent and we are left to conjecture. But it is common knowledge that Lord Wavell brought to Whitehall proposals for a new start. It is a fair inference from the prolongation of his visit to more than six weeks that his plan has not been accepted. We should be little wiser if we were to quote the detailed reports of what may have happened, that come with little variation from many sources, both British and Indian. We assume that the Viceroy has asked (1) for the release of political prisoners and especially of the Congress leaders; (2) for a return to self-government, and probably for elections in the provinces, and (3) for a renewed effort to set up a *de facto* National Government at New Delhi. The third point in the programme is more complicated and controversial than the other two. The first steps that admit of no doubt and brook no delay are the release of the prisoners and the restoration of provincial self-government. Both imply what no one doubts has happened—that Congress, though it is still a gagged and illegal organisation, has long ago turned its back on civil disobedience and is prepared for a co-operative policy. This is cl from its return to responsible office, with Gandhi's approval, in the North-West Fron Province and Assam. Until these two steps taken, the work of reconciliation cannot be nor can the biggest of the Indian parties play part in planning the future. Nothing politicians of the second rank may propose bind Congress until Nehru is free and its Co mittee can meet again.

It is a good sign that the leaders of Congr and the Muslim League in the All-India Le lative Assembly, Bulabhai Desai and Lingaut after inflicting repeated defeats on the Gove ment, are said to be agreed on the formation National Government. They leave Defence the British Commander-in-Chief, and propose divide the seats in the Viceroy's Council in ratio of 40 : 40 : 20 between Hindus, Musli and the smaller minorities. As yet neither them can commit even his own party. It is m to ask of the Hindus that, with three-quarters the population, they should accept less than the seats in the Central Government. Su bargains, once adopted, are apt to be permanen Nor is it certain that Mr. Jinnah will aband Pakistan even if he gets parity between the communities. The effect of this unreal arran ment would be that the powers of the Cen Government must be reduced to modest lim The provinces where effective democracy easier, would become the real units of Gove ment. That would be a disaster, at a time wh Indians are thinking, as never before, of the construction of their whole economic life on plan that must cover the whole Peninsula.

What is wanted from us at this moment is once something less and something more. Fi we must make our gesture of reconciliation, flinging open the doors of our prisons. Ne we must bring our bureaucratic rule to an end the provinces. Finally, we have to discover best way of telling Indians—perhaps by a Ro Proclamation—that we mean, in any event, end our direct rule over their country at a d no later than the end of the Japanese war. long as they suspect that we shall procrastina so long will their minorities frustrate inter agreement by clinging to our protection.

## THIS ENGLAND

**A 5/- prize for the first entry in this colu goes to Clifford Hall.**

**Paste entries on postcard or slip of pap and give details of origin. Address to TH ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.**

Sitting down to choose ribbons for the new ca paign stars and medals announced by the Gove ment yesterday, the King wanted to know the prec colour of the earth in a certain part of the batt fields. So some mud was scraped off Field-Mars Montgomery's car and sent to the King in a sm box.—*Daily Express.*

Repatriated officer, 5 years P.O.W., cannot g married until someone will lease him a 3/4 ro unfurnished flat.—Advt. in *The Times.*

I have only once attended a political meeti and that was 39 years ago . . . I left wonderi how any sensible person could think it profita to attend such a silly business.—Letter by Bish of Chelmsford in *Diocesan Chronicle.*

A wife summoned her husband for desertion, a declared: "One evening my husband asked if he could go out to see Biddy. I said, 'What is worth?' He offered me 10s. and 2s. 6d. for eve hour that he was gone after ten o'clock. He p me £1 2s. 6d."—*Northern Despatch.*

Free Enterprise to be Enforced.—Headline *Manchester Guardian.*

# AN AMERICAN DIARY

HOP-SKIP in one night to Montreal, and a jump another fourteen hours to San Francisco. more trouble than a week-end in Scotland. k by British Airways, now running a regular most comfortable Clipper service from timore. Comfortable by existing standards, noisy, not perfectly air-conditioned and, coming standards, slow. Very swift and quent American planes are promised (via the tosphere) from Chicago as well as from the coast of the United States. Chicago, as I narked in discussing American opinion on return two and a half years ago, will be the tre of imperialist, not isolationist, sentiment as soon as its natural position for a world sport is discovered. One World? No, y the technical part of half a world. We ll have One World when we can go to the king office of any air station and, without a sport, take aircraft (with a pilot of any tionality) as we feel inclined, to Washington, scow, Rio, Chungking, Cape Town, Sydney San Francisco.

* * *

The San Francisco Conference did not give e that this One World was close at hand. ecall being asked in 1939 how long I thought war would last and guessing at 50 years, by ich I meant, not that Britain and Germany uld be fighting as long as that, but that the nditions which prevented frequent wars were e and that new conditions of stability would obably not be established for about another years. That guess still seems as good as ther. All the victorious Powers are now bbing all the strategic positions they can; United States building power in S. America fortifying strategic islands against the S.S.R.; Britain fighting for domination in eece, and North Africa; France trying to d on in the Middle and Far East; Yugoslavia anding in the Adriatic; the U.S.S.R. spread- its power over East and Central Europe. ese are not the conditions of peace, and San ncisco could only have been a genuine success while making a "Charter," the Great Powers l decided to reach practical economic and litary agreements for joint work in over- ping regions. This might have happened, I lieve, if the U.S.S.R. had not allowed its long- tified suspicions to blind it to the opportunity world leadership. As it was, the Soviet Union yed straight into the hands of its enemies. e Conference would have been difficult and mplex enough anyway. Mme. Tabouis, re- ning to France after five years in the United tes, put the point well to me when I met her the train to New York. President Roosevelt, e said, had a simple, even crude, but practic- e notion. Three dominant Powers, with necessarily conflicting vital interests, might ee to keep the peace, even after the unifying ror of a common enemy was gone. But th Roosevelt dead and the war over, this mple conception was forgotten and instead, at n Francisco, an effort was made to bring in all e small Powers and revive the conditions and mosphere of the League of Nations—a quite ferent and contradictory conception. We must ose, she insisted. The democracies are always nking they can reconcile incompatibles.

* * *

There are madmen at large who talk about r with the U.S.S.R. Amongst the worst some high-up American air and naval autho- es who argue that Russia is now not so strong she will be; that we are mobilised and should straight on, bombing and invading the U.S.S.R., waiting, as in the case of Germany, until s almost too late. What these experts do not one is what they would do with Russia after mbing Moscow and driving back the Red my (even supposing they could). Just crazy . Difficult enough to decide what to do with million Germans when they've surrendered; what to do if 200 million Russians, now on your own side, were your enemies, God knows. This type of talk betrays the deep internal weakness within the U.S.A., which seems so strong; it fears, not Russia, but itself, its own economic future, the slump that is prophesied for three years hence and which is only easily remediable by the maintenance of a war economy. I put the point to a famous American publicist. "You will have a gigantic export surplus when the fighting is over," I said. "A Socialist economy could deal with it easily enough by planning ahead for the needs of the population. Failing this, is another great slump not inevitable? Is there a half-way house?" He hesitated. "Perhaps," he said, "a half-slump."

* * *

Lights are not hid under bushels in the United States. You are expected to express yourself on the wireless at short notice on any subject. Would I join in a debate on Poland? I explained that I was no expert. No, but if I did not agree with the London Poles, would I debate with them on the general issue? I agreed, and then, to my horror, saw a notice announcing "Pro-London"—Two Poles; "pro-Lublin"—Claude Cockburn ("Frank Pitcairn" to *Daily Worker* readers) and Critic. Everything must be dramatic. If you are against rattlesnakes then you are in favour of king cobras. I got the notice altered and announced myself as "pro-Yalta." The debate began at half past six. At a quarter past three an escort of police, with revolvers and on motor-cycles, arrived for us at the hotel. Claude and I and the two London Poles were safely stowed into a large car; a police official who looked a more genial Göring, except that he carried pencils instead of pistols in the top of his jack-boots, led the procession. Flanked by outriders with sirens shrieking, and the ordinary traffic disappearing from our path, Claude and I and the two London Poles swept majestically through the streets and across the Bay Bridge to Oakland, where we were received by the Chamber of Commerce, which was doing itself remarkably well at a cocktail party. At 5.30 we sat down to an enormous dinner which included a piece of steak nine inches by four, and about two inches thick (I measured it). As we were told that we had to debate as pugnaciously as we could, and it was a hot day, we all feared to make the best of this meal; we watched each other slyly out of the corners of our eyes to see who was eating with the least discretion. The steaks were left almost untouched.

* * *

I hated the debate. No one was allowed to talk more than half a minute at a time, and the attention of the large assembly which listened in the auditorium, as well as the millions presumably listening in their homes, was supposed only to be held if we all the time attacked each other vigorously. So Claude and I exposed the wickedness of the London Poles and they threw back at us the violent behaviour of the Russians in Poland. We each side-stepped from the others' accusations, and no one was ever allowed to develop any serious argument. The more I was congratulated on my success in the discussion, the more miserable I felt. A few days later, after making sure that the conditions this time would be different, I did another radio discussion, this time on the San Francisco Conference. This was as good as the first was bad, because we were each allowed to talk long enough to explain a balanced point of view, and the experienced chairman only switched the argument when all four of us had said our say. Neither of these two debates would have been possible in the English broadcasting system. Neither of them was rehearsed or censored; both were entirely spontaneous. The one I should say, did harm and the other good.

* * *

Radio commentators are becoming more important even than columnists. It so happened on the night before VE-Day that I found myself in a train with an outstanding star in both firmaments. Walter Winchell speaks on the radio to an audience estimated at 25,000,000, and his newspaper column appears in 840 papers. His reputation in England belies him. Gossip plays only a secondary part now in his features, which are a combination of hot news, attacks on Fascists of all kinds, and a defence of himself and other democratically-disposed persons. Being with Winchell was a new experience to me. In private he never left off talking away about the various controversies in which he was engaged. When the public in the lounge car realised his presence, they gathered round and he continued talking and providing his autograph until five in the morning. He gets up, he tells me, at seven at night. Ten researchers are employed in gathering material for him. When anyone makes a good crack, he writes it down on a slip of paper from his pocket, asking in the most engaging manner if you mind his quoting you. Of course, everyone is flattered. Soldiers and sailors paraded in front of us with notes from all the Japanese islands which they wanted Walter to autograph. As I was sitting by him it was assumed that my signature was also important, though none of those who asked for it had the slightest idea who I was. I signed autographs under Walter's until one in the morning, and then I went to bed. We met again on the platform at Los Angeles. Walter was met by Orson Welles and a number of other celebrities. Drew Pearson was also there. It took us half an hour to talk our way down the platform to the crowd that was waiting outside. During this half-hour Walter continued to display the same inexhaustible vitality and conversational ebullience. As one of his entourage remarked to me, "Walter does his own publicity." Even on this one journey, I suppose some scores of people had been made happy for life by having met Walter.

* * *

The war is still a boom in the United States, even though a crisis looms ahead, with big factories shutting down and many thousands of workers, with Negroes first on the list, already dreading unemployment. San Francisco, one of the most lovely cities, was rather misleading. The food was fantastically good and copious. True, there was a shortage of butter, but following Marie Antoinette's advice, they gave us jam instead. Otherwise, bacon was the only article not on the menu, and you could make up for that, as one Englishman did, by asking for two dozen eggs. (I am told that he had them hard-boiled, and ate them on the road, but I think he was an exception or a myth.) San Francisco was specially favoured for food and cigarettes; much had been specially provided. In New York, apart from the butter and sugar rationing, there is a real shortage of meat, and you do not always get the thing on the menu that you ask for. Shopping is much as it was in England in the earlier days of the war. Particular stocks and particular sizes run out, and you have to take substitutes. But America is very far from the European war; a fantasy from our point of view of brilliance and wealth and lovely clothes and rich food. But behind there is fear—fear of another depression and unemployment.

* * *

I chose my moment badly for being in America. Like other people, I assumed that the war would last several weeks longer than it did. Back here, though there is no reality of peace, there are several things that are deeply comforting. For one thing England is still England; they are replacing the palings in London. More seriously, there is reason for real rejoicing that the war ended soon enough to save Czechoslovakia and Austria from destruction, and to enable the R.A.F. to save the Dutch nation from starvation. I know many pilots who must be happy that at last, in carrying food and repatriating prisoners of war, they are able to use their aeroplanes for a peaceful and constructive job.

CRITIC

# CONTEMPT OF COURT

A FEW years ago an enraged litigant in the Court of Appeal took the unusual course of pelting the Judges (inaccurately) with tomatoes. He was gravely dissatisfied with the law (or with what the Judges considered the law to be), and just then no constitutional means of redress could have offered him any comparable solace. But the Lords Justices sentenced him, on the spot, to six weeks' imprisonment for contempt of court.

In some ways, he was lucky. According to respectable legal authority, the Common Law (surviving some statutory meddlings that have cancelled each other during the centuries) still makes it possible for such an offender to be imprisoned for life, forfeit all his goods and the profits of his lands during life, and have his right hand cut off. Even to-day, the Judges do not always put a period to the imprisonment they impose for "contempt"; the offender sometimes goes to prison until he is prepared to offer a suitable apology; and if he does not apologise the Common Law still contemplates, in its logical perfection, that he shall remain there for the rest of his life. Common Law misdemeanours (of which there are still a few, such as conspiracy, attempted suicide, "public mischief," and contempt of court) have always been held to be punishable by "imprisonment" at the absolute discretion of the Court, as distinct from punishment by penal servitude, a modern statutory punishment upon which Parliament has imposed limits. But as the statutory maximum term of "imprisonment" is two years, this is never exceeded in practice in the case of Common Law offenders.

The Supreme Court of to-day has, in self-protection, taken over some of the practices of the Court of Star Chamber, and one of them relates to the punishment of contempts. It has often been pointed out that the summary imprisonment of a person adjudged to have been guilty of a "contempt," without a trial by jury and with no right of appeal or bail, is a violation of both the spirit and the letter of *Magna Charta*. It is an odd fact that, from the time when juries were invented until the middle of the eighteenth century, juries were always empanelled to try "contempt" cases (unless the accused person confessed his error), even where the contempt took place in open Court. The modern practice of dispensing with juries dates from 1765, when Mr. Justice Wilmot had before him a bookseller named John Almon on a rule *nisi* for publishing a pamphlet libelling the Chief Justice, Lord Mansfield. The pamphlet criticised his Lordship's conduct of a case which had resulted in the outlawry of John Wilkes, some years before, and an application to reverse the outlawry was pending at the time it was published. Mr. Justice Wilmot's written judgment, which rejected the proposition that people accused of contempt were entitled to be tried by jury, was never delivered in Court, because the proceedings against the publisher of the pamphlet were abandoned. It is the more odd, therefore, that this should be the judgment upon which modern practice relies in dealing with contempts.

Mr. Justice Wilmot had professed to find that the power to arrest and imprison summarily in contempt cases "stands upon the very same foundation and basis as trial by jury—immemorial usage and practice." Yet the tomato-thrower of recent years had a prototype in 1631, in the person of a prisoner who threw at the presiding Judge a brickbat "que narrowly mist"; and this man was indicted in the ordinary way and tried by jury. Possibly if he had not "mist," even narrowly, he would not have got a jury.

The appeal to "immemorial usage" has always sustained the Common Law, despite the weakness inherent in the fact that one cannot always know what it is (hence Equity and the Chancery Division), and that it consists in "doing what they did last time." Laws of this kind, as a great American lawyer once said, are "first necessary, then inherent, then implied, then expedient, then adopted, then demonstrated on precedent as well as principle, and finally established and learnedly and eloquently vindicated." The assumption that summary punishment in contempt cases has been used from time immemorial does not appear to be well-founded; but even if it were, it would mean that it had established itself by default.

Yet there have been efforts to get it altered by statute. In the thirty years following 1880 no fewer than five bills were brought into Parliament for this purpose, and all failed to pass. A Select Committee (of lawyers) had reported in 1810 that "the courts have inherent in them the summary power of punishing such contempts by commitment of the offenders without the intervention of a jury." They said that it was founded on the clearest principles of expediency and right, that it was proved by immemorial usage, that it grew up with our constitution, and (oddly enough) that it was one of the most important safeguards of the rights and liberties of the people. But listen to the House of Commons in a resolution of April 4th, 1906—"the jurisdiction of the Judges in dealing with contempt of court is practically arbitrary and unlimited, and calls for the action of Parliament with a view to its definition and limitation." Even in the Lords, where respect for legal precedent generally comes into its own, learned members agreed with Lord Fitzgerald in 1883 that the present course of proceeding in contempt cases was "exceedingly objectionable . . . The party is called up summarily and the matter is inquired into, the judge being at once judge of the law, of the fact, of the intention, and of the sentence—and his decision is without any power of review. . . . Its effect is to enforce silence on the part of the Press when the public interests require the fullest publicity and the closest criticism of what is going on."

It seems to be generally accepted that, where the act of contempt occurs in Court, whether the vehicle of expression be tomatoes, brickbats, oaths, rioting, or the mere refusal to answer any questions, the superior Courts should have the right to commit to prison. (Magistrates and J.P.s have to get on without it, by the way. True, they can commit a recalcitrant witness to prison for seven days, but the utmost they can do with a disorderly stranger, in a summary way, is to adjourn the proceedings, have him removed from the Court, and watch wistfully to see whether he bumps his elbow on the way out. He can be indicted for contempt, of course, and go before a Judge and jury, though apparently this is never done.) But where the contempt occurs in full view of a superior Court, and especially when it is an outrage on that decency of procedure which is essential if justice is to be "seen to be done," there is nothing for a jury to do. Everyone, including the offender, knows what he has done. Portions of tomato still adhere to the walls. It only remains for him to be punished, and perhaps the best punishment is that he should be given a short period of restraint, in order that a calmer mind may induce a regard for more orderly controversy and a sense of relief, in retrospect, that his aim was wild. But unless his legal advisers keep an eye on his case, he will have to rely on the Attorney-General to remember where he is, and that official has more than once obtained the release of some almost forgotten prisoner.

Meanwhile, in countries where "freedom of the Press" is in effect freedom to act first and suffer afterwards, like freedom to sit on a hot stove, censorship sometimes finds a convenient disguise in the law of "contempt." When a criminal case has just concluded, you can partly muzzle the Press by saying in open Court that the question of an appeal to the High Court will be considered. In some cases this statement, to the knowledge of the advocate making it and everyone else with Court experience, has been pure bluff—the right of appeal is generally dependent on the presence of some question of law, and it is only in a minority of cases that such a question arises. Sometimes the Bench is asked to give a certificate of leave appeal to the Court of Criminal Appeal, a sometimes (in Magistrates' Courts) to "state case" for the consideration of the King's Be Division. Refusal does not matter for the purp in hand—the application can be renewed el where; atmosphere is what matters. Appeal *sub judice*—contempt of court. The Press c report this if they like, but let them comment their peril. By the time the appeal has be heard (or even, in minor cases, by the time t period allowed for notice of appeal has expire the case, as a rule, is no longer of interest to t public.

The failure of the recent attempt to get Hi Court writs of attachment against the *Da Telegraph* and the *News of the World*, in resp of their comments on a criminal case pending appeal, was not due to any assumption that danger can be done by Press comment on a c going to the Court of Criminal Appeal. (T judgment points out, in fact, that such an appe *might* result in an order for a new trial by a fre jury.) The application failed merely because t Press articles complained of were decided to innocuous.

Never in history has the integrity of Engli Judges stood so high as it does to-day, and ne had they so little need of protection agai violence or contumely. No one would sugg trial by jury in the case of men like the toma thrower or those who wilfully disobey a rule Court, but the Judges' arbitrary power to puni criticism (even if it could be shown to be firm rooted in the Common Law) is an anachroni no less strange, though far less picturesque, th the troop of cavalry that guards them on the way Assizes or the "sweet herbs" that until recen protected them against gaol-fever.

C. H. ROLPH

# IN THE RUSSIAN ZONE

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN GERMANY]

THE young Red Army sentry by the slend wire barrier marking the boundary of the Briti and Russian zones of occupation was doubtf if he could admit us. So it was fortunate th a fatigue party rumbled up in a cart under smiling N.C.O. who readily agreed to condu us to an officer. In the adjacent German far house which served as their command post Captain and an eager group which seemed include all the junior ranks of the Red Arm strove to make us understand their directions the nearest town. Very young they seemed in the plain green tunics, breeches and high boots.

Soon we were on our way, past a field in whi a company of soldiers was practising simp parade ground drill in preparation for a fort coming reception for some Allied deputatio Their recent training had obviously included b little of the barrack square. At intervals the ro passed under triumphal arches in bright r bunting, bearing the slogan, "Welcome to o valiant Allies" in both English and Russia At every turning stood a clearly marked me sign lettered in the Russian and Latin alphabe The columns of Jeeps and lorries to which were accustomed were noticeably absent. T few vehicle parks seemed to consist mainly captured German trucks, and the favour transport in use seemed to be the long Ar cart dragged at a trot by a couple of well-care for horses. Had the Red Army really broug its supplies for those great advances acro Europe in these, aided by lend-lease lorries?

We approached the little town with ke interest. Back among the British troops w stories were circulating, the aftermath of N propaganda implicitly believed by the civil population and beginning to make its mark ev on the soldiers. The Russians were an und ciplined rabble, not attempting to curb th instincts to rape and loot. No German wom dared show her face in the open. Naked fem bodies lay unburied in the ditches. Goebb

d indeed left a legacy of disruption behind. As we entered the main street we halted in rprise. We were used to the drab dullness of British Zone, with its scanty white flags as only decoration. But this village rivalled lgium in its display of colour. From almost ery house floated proudly a large red, white d black banner. "The flag of the German epublic," said a German policeman who noticed ir surprise. We looked for the familiar signs military occupation—the untidy litter that rrounds a hastily looted house. Everything emed undisturbed. German nurses, attractive their white uniform, walked the streets. Red my men stood smiling in doorways, saluting response to our greeting. Under a tree we mpsed a group of soldiers and children. Non-aternisation was evidently not as indiscriminate it is elsewhere.

On the outskirts of the town a Frenchman earing the Cross of Lorraine stopped us to quire if he would be permitted to cross into British Zone on his way home. "*Tout va* n" was his reply to a question about con-tions in the Russian area. The women had en very scared at first. Had they had cause? asked. "*Je ne le crois pas.*" And with that had to be content.

Why, one is impelled to ask, are there barriers, owever slight, between the Russian area and our n? There are none between us and the mericans. The result is that only a small roportion of even the forward troops have had y form of direct contact with their opposite umbers. Where contact has been established, results are excellent, particularly if the supply vodka is limited. A visiting Russian concert rty was voted by both officers and men the st military entertainment they had ever seen. ut where there is no personal experience ere is fertile ground for Nazi-inspired lies. I as solemnly assured by a British major that our dvance from the Elbe had been dictated by political reasons," that a Russian force had nded unwanted in Denmark, and that our rtillery was being held ready "Just in case." hose who had shouted loudest that all Germans hould be exterminated are now the loudest in ccusing the Russians of outraging them. The gged remnants of the Russian forced labour ontingents which straggled westwards in the rly days and did undoubtedly in many cases reak individual vengeance for their sufferings n isolated German farms are being quoted as typical of the Russian Army." This seed will ourish until the two armies are encouraged to ingle and enter each other's lines at will.

We must be careful not to paint too bright a icture. Cases of loot and sexual violence have ccurred in both the Russian and the British ctors. In the latter they are naturally "hushed p" and are often attributed by the victims emselves to wandering Russians, in an attempt curry favour. In the Russian area they are eing magnified by the German Nazi-conditioned ear of the Bolsheviks, and gleefully circulated y certain elements in the British ranks.

That in itself is sufficiently serious, but there e also deeper causes for disquiet. White ags in one part of Germany—Republican flags n the other side of an imaginary line. Ruthless urging, followed by human relations with the sidual population, on one side; perfunctory urging and general non-fraternisation imposed n the rank and file, on the other. It is high me that the Control Commission got down to e job of sorting out these divergences and roduced a common constructive policy towards e problem of German occupation, or what is ow merely insidious gossip will be given more ourishing material on which to feed.

For the first time we have a chance to establish iendly personal relations between a representative ction of the British and American and Russian oples. On the creation of mutual under-anding the peace of the world will very largely pend. Is the chance to be dissipated by oden barriers and careless talk?

## LOVERS

When we had reached the gate I raised my eyes
and kissing you good-night, I laughed and said:—
I feared the stars might strike you from the skies
Like crystal stones on your too happy head.

FRANCES CORNFORD

## CITY EVENING

This is the hour when night says to the streets:
I am coming! And the light is so strange,
The heart expects adventure in everything it meets
And some impossible change.

FRANCES CORNFORD

## THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH

A SMALL alteration, and the title of Mr. Thornton Wilder's play at the Phoenix Theatre will serve as heading for a criticism of it: "Saved by the skin of its teeth!" Yes, it was a narrow shave—and a great success; often in danger of being dashed to pieces through cutting close round the corner of nonsense, it survived triumphantly. And that it runs such risks is one reason it is so exhilarating to watch. It provokes constant laughter, then subdues us to sombre reflections, and, sometimes and suddenly, touches in us the source of tears. No theme could be more grave and enormous; no treatment more fantastic and light. *The Skin of our Teeth* is an epitome of the history of mankind told as a comic strip!

How, you may well wonder, could such a theme be adapted to the Stage? By taking full advantage of the Art of the Theatre being an art of make-believe. If a dramatist, from the start, says boldly enough, "Let's pretend," then there are few limits to what he can induce us to accept in the way of a symbolism more typical perhaps of children's games and barefaced incongruities. Of course he must know his business; must also possess, in the words of M. Cocteau, who has himself triumphantly exploited this psychological fact in *Orphée*, "tact in audacity, which means knowing how far we may go too far." *Orphée* was a mixture of miracle play and circus; a jumble of sophisticated modernity, classicism and Christian symbolism. *The Skin of our Teeth*, too, is a mixture of miracle-play and modern drama and passages akin to those turns on the music-hall stage when performers take us into their confidence in order to make us laugh. In short, the play is not so much a book of words as a huge ingenious conjuring trick, appealing as much to eye as to ear for its effects, and addressed to the innocent spectator in us all who willingly suspends, like a child, his sense of reality, if once he is excited and beguiled.

Mr. Thornton Wilder has indeed been fortunate in his interpreters. In the first place, Mr. Laurence Olivier, who has produced the entertainment, has understood perfectly the spirit of it; "tact in audacity" exactly describes his production. Secondly, Mr. Roger Furse, who supplied the *décor*, gaily and elegantly kept realism at arm's length. And lastly, in Miss Vivien Leigh, on whom as Sabina falls the responsibility of keeping alive in the audience the "let's-pretend" mood, often by perplexed or disgusted references to the impossibilities of her part, Mr. Wilder has found an actress, not only capable of every shade of coquetry or pathos in the action, but also able to hold the play psychologically together. For *The Skin of our Teeth*, though the characters remain the same throughout, is composed of three episodes each ending on the same note and therefore was as a play in some danger of falling apart.

There is no progressive development, only repetition of the same situation—disaster just survived. Man begins again to build out of his ruins: after the Ice-Age (Act I); after the Deluge (Act II); after Modern War (Act III). That is the underlying idea. It precludes, of course dramatic development towards a final climax. Watch Sabina as a maid with duster in the freezing house of Mr. and Mrs. Antrobus, the prettiest of fluttering waterwag-tails; watch her as the professional beauty in the silly pleasure-hunting world drowned by the Flood; watch her as the *vivandière* in the last act (especially at the moment when she weeps), and you will share her artist's pleasure in the variety of her own part. And note the skill with which she also has helped to make it easy for you to overlook—to forget the preposterous telescoping of time and place, or rather to respond emotionally to the essence of the allegory regardless of anomalies.

In this she was unobtrusively (that was the merit of this small performance) helped by Mr. Monckton in the part of the stage manager, who has at moments to give, so to speak, the whole show away. It is not easy to give the impression on the stage that you are not acting at all.

For some time I was puzzled by the name "Antrobus." Then it dawned on me: it is intended to suggest, "anthropos," Man. Mr. and Mrs. Antrobus are Adam and Eve; and if you like you can take Sabina to be that other legendary symbolic figure of Woman, Lilith. Mr. Antrobus, with his urge to strive, to invent, to organise, to help, represents the bewildered baffled creative spirit of Man; Mrs. Antrobus, Woman, to whom family and children are alone important. The boy, Henry, or Cain, their only surviving offspring, destructive violent egotistic masculinity. Henry, a difficult part, was excellently played by Mr. Terry Morgan, and Mr. Antrobus was acted splendidly by Mr. Cecil Parker. What was the mood in which I left the theatre? Beneath that exhilaration which a remarkable performance produces in us, something akin to the first verse of the poem which Kipling wrote as a prelude to *Puck of Pook's Hill*:

Cities and Thrones and Powers
Stand in Time's eye
Almost as long as flowers
Which daily die;
But, as new buds put forth
To glad new men.
Out of the spent and unconsidered Earth,
The Cities rise again.

One word of advice to the playgoer: don't squeeze the symbolism too hard for meanings—enjoy, laugh, gape, wonder, feel.

DESMOND MACCARTHY

## DESIGN IN THE HOME

THE C.E.M.A. exhibition of "Design in the Home" at the National Gallery deserves the widest circulation. A series of rooms, including both gas and electric kitchens, sets an honourable standard of taste as well as efficiency. If the decorating schemes are somewhat lacking in vitality, variety and personality, the individual objects are for the most part exemplary; and the spectator, who is warned that it is his own business to arrange his home, may be expected to introduce a little more colour, to mix old furniture with new curtains—in fact, to achieve some note of gaiety and surprise. The purpose of the exhibition is presumably to set a standard; and one consequence is that many of the furnishings are expensive, and now even unprocurable. The future of furnishing depends chiefly on the good will, and readiness to learn, of the manufacturers. For this reason the enjoyable exhibition of wallpapers at the R.I.B.A. galleries in Suffolk Street may be more important. It has been organised by the Central Institute of Art and Design for the British Wallpaper Industry, and it is very well displayed. The historical section contains a rich variety of beautifully decorative papers, Chinese, Italian, and French as well as English. Some of the mid-Victorian papers are remarkably pretty, those, for instance, commemorating the Duke of Wellington and Crystal Palace. Then there is a collection of papers produced between 1892 and 1910 by one William Shand Kydd, most

of them wonderfully hideous, but historically interesting because of the fell influence they have continued to exercise on the industry. William Morris, on the other hand, is an incomparably better designer, poorly represented. The importance of the exhibition is that it suggests some desire on the part of the manufacturers to rejuvenate their industry. No department of English applied art has fallen into more complete decadence than the wallpaper. Reproductions of charming Regency and early Victorian designs were still obtainable before the war, but the new designs, unless quite plain, were almost without exception vulgar—and vulgar with a deprecatory anaemic glumness Vapid droops of wistaria alternated with would-be "cubist" designs in off-khaki. (The screens in this exhibition of so-called "panoramic" papers deserve preservation in a museum of Bad Taste, such as I long to see set up for cautionary purposes.)

For my part I like wallpapers, often even as a background for paintings. But I have had to buy modern American or French papers, or reproductions of old English papers, or hand-printed papers by Mr. Edward Bawden. It is a great pity, incidentally, that the exhibition includes no modern French papers. Who is responsible for this lack? Unless our manufacturers know with what they have to compete, how can they hope to recover foreign markets? The British consumer also has a right to see what other countries can attain.

The section of the exhibition devoted to new designs contains a little good stuff, besides much that is insipid. For some reason which I shall not attempt to penetrate, the designer who is given far more space than any of his contemporaries is Sir Francis Rose. But the pertinacious visitor will be able to detect several designs by Graham Sutherland. (Extraordinary how this exalted, romantic artist can adapt himself to applied art: his wallpapers are no less happy than his tea-cups.) Other good designs come from Rosemary and Clifford Ellis, Stephen Russ, M. Holden, Margaret Simeon and Jacqueline Gloag.

A series of furnished rooms, designed by individuals, show the use of wallpaper in interior decoration. Lady Clark, Mr. Allan Walton, and above all, Mr. Cecil Beaton, have done particularly well. The catalogue, on the other hand, includes some suggested decorative schemes that would cause ribald laughter abroad—in the United States, for instance. But perhaps these are meant to attract the potentates of Madagascar or Zanzibar. Does the Central Institute really sponsor these extravagances, or is this just the taste of the manufacturers creeping in? There seems indeed to be a duality in this exhibition, as if the manufacturers had called for outside advice, and then insisted on obtruding their own unregenerate preferences. Whether this is so I do not know, but if a serious attempt upon foreign markets is to be made, they will have to show more enterprise than this exhibition displays. And since they have asked Mr. Allan Walton to arrange a room for them, I would recommend further recourse to his advice. He has been the head of the Glasgow School of Art, and he used to produce furnishing fabrics that were incomparably the best in this country.

I have talked of foreign markets, because in these we have to make up for a long era of backwardness and the competition will be severe. But the houses that are to be put up for our own people will need all the gaiety that wallpapers can bring—and far too few of the new designs are gay. Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell, in his excellent introduction to the catalogue, suggests that hints for wallpaper design could be found in the ornamentation of gypsy caravans and of the barges on the Grand Union Canal. Will anyone listen? At present popular taste is hardly better catered for than cultivated taste. A wan, suburban gentility has for long been the most conspicuous note of English wallpapers. And, alas, this exhibition betrays only the mildest signs of any determination to change.

ROGER MARVELL

## RADIO NOTES

TOMMY HANDLEY: "I suppose *you* remember Mafeking night, Colonel?" Colonel: "No one remembers Mafeking night, Sir!" This Johnsonian answer seems unlikely to be given, forty-five years hence, to a similar question about V-E night. The reason, however, will be different: an orgy of timeless joy was impossible, in 1945, to any but the very young indeed. Besides—and this is, I think, in some respects a pity—we are no longer, by and large, so naïve a people as we were at the beginning of the century.

*Itma* is its own standard, and perhaps operates at a level which gives it an advantage over other types of programme, at moments like these. At all events, its (no doubt unconscious) status of contemporary *commedia dell'arte* enabled it, in Victory week, to salute the British character more truly and less self-consciously than those programmes which addressed themselves overtly to that tricky business. As I pointed out last week, we have lost the sense of pageantry; how otherwise should we tolerate the dusty, creaking contraption broadcast under the title of "London Victorious"? Surely something a little fresher, a little more spirited, a little less of a scrap-heap of clichés and worn-out radio junk could have been mustered to illustrate this, after all, grand theme. Is there anybody, in this year of grace, who is stimulated by hearing the parts of a sentence, or a list of names, put up to auction and knocked down to the most vociferous bidder? A poetic tribute to London, laid out on dramatic lines, was as feasible as it was called for; but a great deal more pains, and some little touch of originality, are needed to save these things from collapsing into a welter of cynical vulgarity.

RECOMMENDATIONS.—*May* 27. Griller Quartet and Clifford Curzon (2.30); *Belsen*—Facts and Thoughts (9.15); "This was an American" (9.30).

*May* 28. Reading from Pope's Iliad (4.15); Symphony Concert (G.F.P., 5.50); "What's the Point of History?" (7.40).

*May* 29. Bad Poems by Great Men (10.40).

*May* 30. "The story of a Village Church" (7.15); Symphony Concert (7.45).

*May* 31. Rubbra Fourth Symphony (7.40); Shakespeare's Henry IV, Episode 1 (9.30).

*June* 1. "Non-Fraternisation" (Discussion, 7.30); Radio Portrait of Dr. Thomas Bowdler (8.20).

*June* 2. Symphony Concert (2.30).

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

## PLAYS AND PICTURES

**"The Gay Pavilion," at the Piccadilly Theatre**

*The Gay Pavilion* tells in somewhat prosaic terms of the secret marriage of the Prince of Wales and Mrs. Fitzherbert, their subsequent idylls, family difficulties, and the final renunciation of love for affairs of State. Unfortunately by the end of the nine years through which the play takes us the lovers have not developed into characters, and we are not particularly sympathetic to their troubles, since they are not set to music. Perhaps if this romance of abdication had been produced nine years ago its theme would have had topical interest. The author, Mr. Lipscomb, has not been well served by his leading actors. The Prince is a stick, and the sojourn in musical comedy of his heroine has robbed her of a sense of reality. Of the little we know of Mrs. Fitzherbert we have heard of her dignity, distinction, coldness, and, above all, her charm. Miss Mary Ellis, misdirected or miscast, plays Maria with a barmaid robustness that is ill-suited to her somewhat stylised speeches. Her dainty trippings, juvenile pouts and goo-goo eye-work do not convey Regency allure so much as the accepted impersonation of Nell of Old Drury. Miss Muriel Aked as the interfering Queen makes a refreshing appearance to rearrange the furniture; Mr. Frederick Valk is compelling as the strangely wandering King and Mr. Frank Allenby gives elegance to the Mephistophelean Sheridan. This unwitty play is elaborately mounted with taste—a series of gouache interiors serve as background to some delightful dresses.

## THE MOVIES

**"Report from Burma," M.O.I. documentary.**
**"The Master Race," at the Ritz.**
**"A Medal for Benny," at the Plaza.**
**"The Princess and the Pirate," at the Leicest Square.**

*Report from Burma* should have been made a shown a year ago, with a far more complete record follow and to take its place. We do, in fact, in t present film, see the crossing of the Chindwin, b nothing like enough, either cinematically or politicall is made of our achievements on this front. No m to tell us what is happening, no focus of even conventional material rather indifferently shot. Ho ever, so meagre has been the reporting from th front, it's satisfying as far as it goes. The monso pours down; elephants roll logs to make a pontoo mules take the hill-track, tanks approach a Jap stron hold; and the men—British, Indian and Negro plough through jungle, over mountain pass, acro river, sometimes stripped to the waist in rain, other times carrying a kit of 70 lbs. odd on th backs. We are told that many of these men crossi the Chindwin have travelled 1,000 miles across Bur to get there. Major Frank Owen's commenta gives urgency to a film which would otherwise rather flat in the presentation, though striking in facts.

The war continues to exert a pressure on films fr Hollywood. Almost as topically timed as *Hotel Berl* the shattered Belgian town of *The Master Ra* gives us a gruesome and not unconvincing picture peace in Europe. The Allies have marched in, t prisoners have been set free from the concentrati camp, the Nazis locked up in their place, the fe inhabitants wander among the ruins, are given sou and encouraged to start ploughing in the fields. fugitive colonel from Wehrmacht Headquarters beg to weave plots. Not a bad guess that, if you put side by side with the week's news from Germa But having guessed so far the film's inspiration ten to give out. There are some good sets of ha demolished streets, but they look like good sets. T blitzed church has an especially romantic look, a sure enough sentimentality clings to it more than on After episodes that are sometimes moving and som times melodramatic, the Wehrmacht officer (notab well played by George Colouris) is unmasked a shot in the town square. "I respect faith of any kind says the too amiable English captain, who takes reading lessons in the blitzed church. Unfortunatel the most inflexible faith is displayed by the Wehrmac colonel; he makes a brief speech before being sh which is horribly full of promise for the future.

The funny side of *A Medal for Benny*, a story public hero-worship, has already been turned up Preston Sturges. Here is the reverse, drab and patheti The hero, a genuine one, posthumously awarded t Congressional Medal, turns out to be the son of *paisano* living in quite the wrong part of the tow So they drag his poor old father into more fashionab quarters, set him up for a week, photograph and fe him, hang out all the banners that alert publicity c devise. But on the great day of the presentati the old man is back among the *paisanos* where belongs. Admirable and touching performance J. Carrol Naish. How true is this picture of t Spanish-Indian-Mexican peasants of California, don't know, but Steinbeck's hand in the story leav its usual mixture of realism and vague sentime Goodish film that could have done without its s turns; Miss Lamour, for example, trying again act. Why can't she, like the lilies of the field, well alone?

Disappointing Bob Hope piece. *The Princess a the Pirate* is in Goldwyn Technicolor, and it's burlesque of buccaneer films, but to find it riot you have to have enjoyed, I imagine, buccaneer fil Still, Bob Hope manages to be funny in a more t usually frightened way. Some of the fights are thoroughgoing that possibly this nervousness w well-founded. In fairness I must add that t Leicester Square Cinema has the longest queu outside and—whatever you or I may feel—t loudest laughs within.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

# Correspondence

## HOUSING

SIR,—No doubt the provision of new housing must form the major part of any solution to the housing shortage, but as your correspondent, Captain R. A. (B.L.A.) says, so far as one can see or hear, the Government does little or nothing to bring existing property into reoccupation. Apart from properties seriously war-damaged in London, it is a verifiable fact that there are vast numbers of habitable houses in which no one is living because :

(*a*) They are being used solely for storing furniture ; or

(*b*) their owners can afford to leave them empty and do not bother about them ; or

(*c*) their owners do not seek to have minor repairs done ; or

(*d*) on certain large estates tenants are forbidden to sub-let parts of houses which are too large for any one family (even where the premises are entirely suitable for division without any structural alteration—i.e., where bathrooms, lavatories and kitchens already exist in separate parts of the house).

These are reasons I have encountered over and over again during a two years' unsuccessful search in London for an unfurnished self-contained flat or small house at a reasonable rent. There are probably also properties unoccupied for other equally trivial reasons unknown to me.

Presumably the owners themselves are enjoying accommodation of one kind or another elsewhere.

In regard to estates where tenants are forbidden by their leases to sub-let, it is about two years since some of the big London agents first said to me, "We are *still* waiting for the Government to legislate to remove this prohibition." Even if legislation in these matters is undesirable or impossible, there still remains a great deal outside actual legislation that could be done by the Government to try to bring at least some of the existing empty housing in habitable condition into reoccupation.

One London Rehousing Department (Westminster) told me last week that if I had been bombed out in their area or were in some other way eligible for receiving assistance from them in finding accommodation, the best that they could offer me would be "two scruffy rooms without a bathroom—you wouldn't want them." Yet in that very district there are hundreds of empty properties.

104 Merton Hall Road, S.W.19. EDEN PEACOCK

## THE LITTLE MAN

SIR,—Your article of May 12 on Hitler gave but a one-sided picture of a man who, sinister though he was, yet possessed an astonishing and uncanny power of attraction not only in his own country but even in our own. I am not thinking of those of the possessing classes who before the war saw in Nazi Germany a bulwark against Bolshevism, but of the "little men" who, like Hitler himself, had striven in vain to rise in the social and cultural scale. In one aspect of his life Hitler was the aspiring and ever-thwarted reject of our far from democratic society, who sought to revenge himself upon it for the frustration of all his early ambitions and hopes. His appeal was to all those of like feeling in the like class.

I have known two convinced English Nazis—both unfortunate and unhappy men who left school at 14 still desperately desirous of achieving the culture their home background had denied them. The one married a girl of his own class but without any of his cultural aspirations, and his married life was a torment. He became a Jew-hater and an admirer of Hitler. The other was an illegitimate child, who, on being betrayed by his best friend with his girl, became a homosexual, and finally felt himself a social outcast. He became a Fascist and trained in Germany under Sauckel. If Hitler had such power over two men, who were in themselves unfortunate but by no means un-English characters, can we truthfully call him a little man ? In many ways, alas! he was a representative one—typical of those depressed and thwarted classes that the early years of the twentieth century and the war of 1914–18 cast up upon the shores of Europe. But in two ways he was far from representative, and in both of these he made a particular appeal to the German mentality. For he possessed an extreme of passion and an extreme of will-power. In these he was far from little, and the proof is that for a dozen years he has raged through Europe scattering terror and ruin wherever his will has prevailed.

The Old House, Blandford, Dorset. W. T. R. RAWSON

## PRISONERS' CHARTER

SIR,—The cruelties of Buchenwald and Belsen have stirred us sufficiently to give serious thought to the idea of a universally enforceable Prisoners' Charter. Those of us who had to suffer the indignities of Indian Prison Camps or the long-drawn agony of a 6 ft. by 4 ft. cell in the hot summer months, with little or no water, with heavy "bar-fetters" cutting into our flesh, and on filthy, indescribable food, known in India as "Penal Diet," will welcome such a Charter most heartily. Recently we have heard of the case of the renowned socialist, Jai Prakash Narain, who was made to sit on ice-blocks for long periods in the Lahore Central Prison, so that he might be persuaded to "confess." The ex-Premier of Orissa, Mr. B. Das, with other political prisoners of similar rank and position, was subjected to two lathi-charges in the court-yard of the Berhampur Prison in January, 1944. A lathi-charge within a confined space which has no way of escape means simply an indiscriminate beating-up.

These are but few glaring instances. Indian political prisoners have no means of making known their sufferings. It is only when some famous personality is involved that we come to know of the facts. Yet I could cite so many more such cases. The whipping of political prisoners is still continuing.

Perhaps through the efforts of the British Press, this Prisoners' Charter will receive the sanction of public opinion throughout the civilised world. This Charter will, however, be no more than a declaration of rights, unless at the same time an International Commission is set up, charged with the function of regular inspection, and reporting on the conditions of prisons in every land. D. M. SEN

16 Turl Street, Oxford.

## WHOSE CHILDREN?

SIR,—Your correspondent "Alphonse" tells a tale which, sad as it is, is not surprising to anyone who works with and for children. Neglect and even cruelty on the part of the parents are all too common ; and dilatoriness and lack of interest on the part of officials, often over-worked and remote from the cases, is not unknown either. But if your correspondent had been the headmaster of a London school he would have had an ally in his efforts ; for there he could have called upon the Care Committee for help.

The L.C.C. Care Committees exist to deal with precisely the situation described. They are composed of full-time paid organisers and part-time voluntary workers, and they function in the twelve districts into which London is divided. How do they work? The voluntary workers, of whom before the war there were some 5,000, are first trained and then directed by the organisers, who hold the threads of the elements making up the life of the child. But the volunteer has the opportunity to form a link between home, schools, hospitals, doctors, and particularly to deal with the child as part of the family unit. The teacher sees him at school, the club or scout leader at play ; but the voluntary worker can see him at home, in the relationship which is most fundamental to him. And because she is a volunteer she can win the confidence


***The Left Was Never Right***

*by*

***Quintin Hogg, M.P.***

This trenchant survey is the answer, by one of the ablest of the younger Conservative M.P.s, to such attacks on the Tory Party as *Guilty Men*, *The Trial of Mussolini*, and *Your M.P.* It is first-rate political polemic, and we publish it as such. At the same time it is a fearless and clear-sighted analysis of the political and national weaknesses that so nearly led to utter disaster, and as such it may well mark a turning-point in our political history. For many readers, therefore, the lasting value of this book will lie in the lessons it draws from the past, for as Captain Hogg says, "The main object of this book is not recrimination but policy. We have all made mistakes—not excluding the Conservative Party. I am more concerned to show what some of these mistakes were, and to hope that we may all profit by the lesson to be learned from them, than to pillory those who made them."

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W. P. CROZIER

**The Fates Are Laughing**

W. P. Crozier, the late editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, completed this his first novel, shortly before his death a year ago. It is set in the period following the retirement to Capri of the Emperor Tiberius, that of Caius Caesar (Caligula) until the succession of Claudius.

[10*s* 6*d net*]

JONATHAN CAPE

of the parents; no stigma is attached to her visits, no compulsion to her recommendations, she is a friend.

It is possible that, in the case quoted by "Alphonse," a C.C. worker, because she had time at her disposal, could have co-ordinated the various departments under inquiry and have obtained help for the children in a much shorter space of time. Other county authorities might indeed do well to consider the London plan. At the present time, with children returning from evacuation, and all the various problems both material and spiritual arising therefrom, the need for volunteer workers in London is greater than ever. Any women whose wartime job is over could not do better than to write to Miss H. Guthrie, Central Council of Children's Care Committees, Room 161, County Hall, S.E.1, who will send all information.

DOROTHY MOULTON MAYER

2, Devonshire Street, W.1.

## FORCES EDUCATION

SIR,—The following extracts are from the letter of a young student now serving as a L.A.C. with the R.A.F. in Holland.

Why does our mail take so long each way? Surely there ought to be more labour available now at the central Army P.O.s. We lack news through every channel. The B.B.C. is inadequate and bare in outline and last week only two popular papers reached this wing, with a batch of magazines two months old. A more adequate and faster delivery of news is essential for maintaining morale and continuity with the changes imminent in Britain.

Then there is all this talk about E. V. T. schemes and many men are coming forward to study or train for post-war jobs. Unfortunately, we are *sans* equipment, books or help and enthusiasm is quenched in its first spark. Text-books are urgent, why does the Government persist in this paper rationing cutting at the vitals of publishing? The Canadians and Americans have organised 7-day University courses for the troops in Paris, etc., but what about us?

If only people at home could realise the dire harm this seeming lack of interest is causing to the men out here. We feel that we, as human beings, are passed over, so long as the war machine is geared efficiently. Don't think that these are just moans, they are real and justified grievances of thousands of men, who are wondering why they, the fighting chaps away from home, should always be awarded a second place in things that matter. I wish that you could bring this to the attention of those who have a voice in public affairs.

I hope that you will grant this request by publishing these extracts in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION. Incidentally, the letter was posted from Holland on May 12th, but did not reach me until May 19th.

EVELYN M. PECHEY

St. Peter's, Yateley, Camberley, Surrey.

## MAURITIUS RELIEF

SIR,—The two cyclones which recently visited the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean have caused damage to plantations and property on a considerable scale. Four thousand (4,000) people are homeless. Picture houses have been converted into temporary dwellings and to relieve the situation India, Australia, South Africa, Kenya and Madagascar have been asked to help with the supply of food and medicine.

The storms were of unparalleled violence, and the trail of suffering can better be imagined than described. The people of Mauritius have borne with courage and fortitude the great disaster which has overtaken their island-home. I am sure that the British public would sympathise with them.

To alleviate distress, a relief fund has been opened in Mauritius to which the Imperial Government has made an initial contribution of £10,000. Your readers might be interested to know that subscriptions could be sent to the Mauritius Bureau and War Fund, 21B Gloucester Place, W.1.

K. HAZAREESINGH

Cambridge.

## TRUTH AND THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

SIR,—In view of the fact that my letter of March 17th to THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, and my questions in a later letter, have elicited no reply from Catholic sources of authority in England, I have now written to the Congregation of the Holy Office in Rome about the matter.

I sent the Congregation a copy of my letter of March 17th to THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION and a copy of Canon Mahoney's letter to which I referred.

Owing to the fact that I have been unable to get a reply from the Catholic authorities in England, I asked the Holy Office for its answer to the following questions:—

1. Whether Catholics are now forbidden even to ask what the Faith is?

2. Whether Catholics are to sit down and do nothing when the "madness" of "liberty of conscience" is put forward as Catholic doctrine by the English Bishops? (Pope Gregory XVI denounced "liberty of conscience" as "madness.")

3. If the Holy Office agrees that Catholics ought not to sit down and do nothing about propaganda so uncandid, what would the Holy Office suggest that Catholics ought to do?

I shall be glad, if you will print it, to inform you of any reply that the Holy Office may send to the above questions.

JOHN V. SIMCOX

## WEEK-END COMPETITIONS

SIR,—I am editing a NEW STATESMAN AND NATION Competitions book for Faber and Faber, illustrations by Nicholas Bentley. Permission to reprint has been given by many regular competitors, but I cannot write personally to each one of them. May I, therefore, with this notice, assume a general permission to reprint entries that have appeared in our competitions during the last six years? Any competitor wishing to withhold permission would perhaps let me know quickly.

G. W. STONIER

10, Great Turnstile, Holborn, London.

## NO ALIBI?

SIR,—It would be pedantic to correct an error in a letter by Allan M. Laing, were it not that his own strictures on editorial usage impose a standard of accuracy equally binding, one hopes, on himself. Mr. Laing speaks of King Canute (or Knut) trying to stem the tide; but all responsible historians agree that it was only the foolish courtiers who believed that this could be done, and the king who demonstrated its impossibility. In face of the defamatory story circulated so often and, alas, repeated by Mr. Laing, Canute would seem to have a good defence, if not an alibi.

LIEUT. R.A.

## LORD LUGARD

SIR,—I have been entrusted by Major E. J. Lugard, brother and sole executor of the late Lord Lugard, with the great privilege of writing the latter's biography. I should be most grateful if those who have any of Lord Lugard's letters or other material or information concerning him, and who are willing to help me, would be so very kind as to communicate with me. Any letters which are lent me will be returned after a very brief interval.

MARGERY PERHAM

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# BOOKS IN GENERAL

ONLY perfection contented Henry James. Himself a wilful alpinist, undeterred by pitiful example or unfavourable report, he turned occasionally from some lofty perch to gaze in puzzlement at those who were unable, or did not care, to brave a similar climb. Of George Sand, for instance, he noted that for all her gift she had no store of ambition, remaining at best a great improvisatrice. Similarly, in the Goncourts he had to deplore a smallness and stuffiness of outlook, even a compulsion to nag—or rather, as he put it, a certain constant "soreness of their sentient parts." Painters (Daumier, Sargent and Edwin Abbey) interested him; but there, too, he found sometimes an inexplicable failure of growth. Sargent, for instance, offered to James's eye "the slightly uncanny spectacle of a talent which on the very threshold of its career has nothing more to learn." James never stopped learning, and he cared nothing for the gipsy art of improvisation. He had, for example, a certain inherited singularity of phrase (his father once described a work of Swedenborg as "insipid with veracity"); but this talent was put severely to school, and given full freedom only long after James had written and published his first timidities. His thoughts were habitually put by, to ripen and fatten; and like other writers of his time—like Henry Adams, above all—he was a late and slow harvester. As much could be guessed by any attentive reader; but there seems now every chance that, with the publication of his working notebooks, the domestic history of his art may be finally revealed. These notebooks, eight in number, cover the years from 1878 to 1914, and run in all to some 180,000 words. They would, in any case, represent, for literary persons, a curiosity analogous to that of the scorched heart of Shelley, the foot of Byron, the kissed umbrella of Kierkegaard or the waterproof of Wordsworth. For students of the novel, however, their interest is more than curious; and for those engaged in that ceaseless and most difficult of wars, the war against the middlebrows, they must have the fascination which is exerted upon other campaigners by the journals and night-thoughts of such great captains as Nelson and Turenne. The notebooks are shortly to be published in full, and meanwhile, Professor F. O. Matthiessen has been able to use them in preparing his *Henry James: The Major Phase*.*

*The Major Phase*, though it has chiefly to do with James's three crowning novels and the unfinished *Ivory Tower*, does, in effect, resume the whole of his career. For the great novels are seen to grow from tiny, wind-blown particles of talk and experience, shored up between the covers of the notebooks and taken thence many years later. In themselves little or much, to the novelist they were valuable only in the context of that wooing of his art, that sustained and patient wooing which finds its memorial in such passages as this: "To live *in* the world of creation—to get into it and stay in it—to frequent it and haunt it—to *think* intensely and fruitfully—to woo combinations and inspirations into being by a depth and continuity of attention and meditation—this is the only thing." Beneath the intense particular attention which James gave to every incident of life resides the belief of the great classical artist that "one does nothing of value in art or literature unless one has some general ideas." Theory includes practice; but theory must continually be tried by the "frequent, fruitful, intimate battle with the particular idea, with the subject, the possibility, the place." As for any compromise with the reader, or any attempt "to take the measure of the huge flat foot of the public," this was the ever-present danger, the phylloxera which kills the vine. James knew very well, for instance, the frustration of the sedentary man in wartime; he had been an invalid during the American Civil War, and had painfully sensed the anomaly of an inward life at such times of "immense and prolonged outwardness." But he knew also the fatality of any surrender to "the portentously *bête* public." It has often been said that the failure of Henry James's plays dealt him a mortal blow; but Dr. Matthiessen is able to show that on the contrary this rebuff served to set off a great charge of energy and bold purpose. James had been at school with Coquelin, and he savoured the tradition of the *Théâtre français* as few foreigners have done; and on balance, the contemptuous rejection of his plays in this country was less important, one may say, than the definitive twist which it gave to his ambition. He could go back to novel-writing ("I take up my *own* old pen again") with a new awareness of its prime values. The subject, first of all, must be such as would engage and stretch all his powers to the limit; such themes were "the only thing on which, henceforth, it is of the slightest use for me to expend myself. Everything else breaks down, collapses, turns thin, turns poor, turns wretched—betrays one miserably. Only the fine, the large, the human, the natural, the fundamental, the passionate things." Such subjects, if dipped in the lifelong solvent of imaginative reflection, would one day come to something;

> It all comes back to the old, old lesson—that of the art of *reflection*. When I practise it the whole field is lighted up—I feel again the multitudinous pressure of all human situations and pictures, the surge and pressure of *life*. All passions, all combinations, are there.

No sooner had James thrown off the first shock of his failure in the theatre than his faith in this sovereign soaking of ideas was amply borne out. The subject of *The Wings of the Dove* had lain for years in his mind—had sprung in fact from the early death, from tuberculosis, of a favourite cousin. It was indeed "a very old—if I shouldn't perhaps rather say a very young—motive," and one which had been with him almost as long as memory itself. Thus suddenly, and at a period so often construed as one of pitiful despair, James revived:

> I have been reading over the long note I made some time since on the subject of the dying girl who wants to live—to live and love; and am greatly struck with all it contains. It is there, the story; strongly, richly there; a thing surely of great potential interest and beauty and of a strong firm artistic *ossature*. It is *full*—this scheme; and one has only to stir it up *à pleines mains*.

With so deeply engaging a theme, and with his vastly improved sense of construction, his new reliance upon an exact scenario, James could again venture beyond *nouvelle* length. The short story had always been a favourite ploy of his, and much of his best work was done while composing "a multitude of pictures of my time, projecting my small circular frame upon as many different spots as possible"; but Dr. Matthiessen movingly conveys his joy and relief at being able once again to dare some enterprise of more majestic port.

Dr. Matthiessen comments that "only occasionally does one of James's themes seem richly human in its very first sketching." These first notes are very often fragments of talk—gossip about a Vanderbilt divorce, or scraps which James had heard at tea from Lady Stanley or Mrs. Lynn Linton; and many readers have argued that neither they, nor the enormous tabernacles in which they are finally enshrined, quite repay the infinity of trouble which James requires of his audience. This arises partly, I think, from our present dim cult of the probable; partly from the belief that moral issues of the first importance must necessarily be illustrated with a corresponding weight of physical incident; and partly because James's largely pictorial method of exposition has never become a general convention of the novel. Dr. Matthiessen does much to clarify this. He notes, for instance, that James was an ocular witness in an ocular age, an observer who instinctively resolved his plots into a succession of pictures. Many of these are of the greatest beauty; the boating scene in *The Ambassadors*, for instance, has the physical amplitude of Renoir, and is perhaps the best evocation of happiness in any English novel. From others, more sombre and complex, Dr. Matthiessen picks out especially the scene from *The Golden Bowl* in which, in a single visual image (that of four characters seated round the green cloth and silver flambeaux of a card-table), James contrives to condense all the essential aspects of his drama; it is this tableau which brings home to Maggie Verver "the horror of finding evil seated all at its ease, where she had only dreamed of good; the horror of the thing hideously *behind* so much trusted, so much pretended nobleness, cleverness, tenderness." This horror is in part circumstantial, a by-product of "the black and merciless things that are behind the great possessions"; but the evil is also a moral one. Henry James's father, and his brother William James, had both endured that most disquieting of Victorian experiences—the hallucination that personified evil, in some fetid and squatting shape, had presented itself to them; and one feels that some such image appeared sometimes to Henry James also, and would rush like a mad fire-engine through the quiet streets of his mind.

Too little has been said of the transcendent art with which James was able at the major phase of his career to marshal and deploy the resources of the English language. Nothing more surely conveys the authentic Jamesian litt of the heart than the image in which, for instance, a young prince is compared to "the high windows of a Roman palace thrown open on a feast day to the golden air," or the face of a middle-aged industrial bandit to "the hard ice of a large pond at the end of a long day's skating." On his women James lavished images and collations of sense too sustained for quotation; but one may recall the faces "calm as a room kept dusted and aired for candid earnest occasions," the hostess like "a steamboat with splashing screw," the transatlantic monster like "a projectile of great size, loaded and ready for use." Dr. Matthiessen remarks that James was, in some ways, backward-looking and tended to take his metaphors of disaster, for example, from the events of 1790; but once at least he looked clearly forwards—when the owner of a new pleasure-house eyed it "much as he might have eyed some monstrous modern machine, one of those his generation was going to be expected to master, to fly in, to fight in, to take the terrible women of the future out for airings in . . ." Here again Dr. Matthiessen is able to expose one of the most familiar parrotries of Jamesian criticism—the belief that James's revisions for the definitive edition of his novels erred always upon the side of length and pretension. People mattered a great deal to James, and his steadily increasing powers of image and symbol were always spent freely in the effort to convey the uniqueness, the particular marvel of each person. His longest metaphors (Mr. Logan Pearsall Smith has called them "palatial") are in effect, poetic variations as moving and as accomplished as those which Matisse has recently completed upon the theme of a girl's head and unbound hair. Dr. Matthiessen shows that his revisions were almost always from abstract to concrete; James came to put ever more trust in verbal movement, and where there is exceptionally some elaboration of motive, it shows mostly the brevity and sure poignance of the master at his zenith. Such strokes may not be judged fully, however, except in their context; and it is the virtue of Dr. Matthiessen's modest and most workmanlike book that it sends the reader straight back to the original. As to what a novice will find there, it is enough to recall the lines in which Mr. Edmund Wilson once spoke of "the classical equanimity, the classical combination of realism with harmony, which have been so rare in American and English literature alike, and of which James is one of the only examples."

JOHN RUSSELL

* *Henry James: The Major Phase*. By F. O. Matthiessen. *Oxford University Press*. New York, $2.50.

## EPIC MAN

**From Virgil to Milton** By C. M. BOWRA. *Macmillan.* 15*s.*

Dr. Bowra's versatile learning is impressive: he seems equally at home with Greek, Latin, Symbolism, Russian verse and the epics of four countries. As one would expect, he has written on his four chosen epics an extremely interesting book. They are literary epics; he begins by analysing the distinction between literary and oral: Homer, Beowulf, Roland, on the one hand, the *Æneid*, the *Lusiads*, Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata*, *Paradise Lost*, on the other; in the first class the hero, tough and magnificent, acts with individual prowess; in the second, less dashing, more complex, he is a figure of destiny, fulfilling larger purposes than his own honour. Æneas is Rome; not always admirable, seldom happy, he is the tool of the gods and must be about their business; he is great because Rome will be great, and he is to found it because Augustus will be great and he is to sire him. A complicated, dubious man, he follows his road, pious, god-driven, serving Rome and achieving universality. It was part of what E. M. Forster has called "Virgil's prosperous but strange career" to be the model for Christian epicists of all nations. "Once Virgil had recast the heroic ideal in a new mould," says Dr. Bowra, "he set an example which later poets could not but follow." So, Æneid-soaked, Camoens, wrote his epic of Portugal, Tasso his of chivalry and crusades, Milton his of man's creation and fall. All are god-haunted, all seek a country: they are linked by grandeur of purpose. "Afraid of nothing but his nagging gods": the phrase, applied to Æneas by a recent poet, serves, too, for Tasso's knights, who, though amorous and Italian, put the love of their pagan ladies below their conversion; and for the discomfited Adam; and for the Portuguese mariners, plagued and protected by their capricious heathen divinities whose sharing of theocracy with the Christian heavenly beings struck Voltaire as so injudicious.

It is unusual and delightful that Dr. Bowra should have chosen *Os Lusiadas* as one of his epics. The Portuguese have always complained—and the Brazilian Ambassador did so the other day—of indifference to their national epic abroad. Fanshawe in the seventeenth century, Mickle in the eighteenth, put it on the English literary map; but it did not last. Dr. Bowra's analysis and account are most attractive and might revive it. For his excerpts he has chosen Fanshawe's translation, racier and more vivid than the pompous Mickle's, but given to a wilder inaccuracy. Mickle complained that his forerunner made up whole passages, was bald, harsh and unpoetical, and could never have enough of "puns, conceits and low, quaint expressions" (partly rivalry, partly 1776's natural disgust with 1655). Verse translations are the devil, unless, like Pope and Dryden, the translator, himself a first-class poet, creates a new thing; otherwise prose versions are better. Camoens begins his epic, "Arms and illustrious barons"—admirable. Fanshawe makes it "Arms and the men above the vulgar file"—flat and wretched. All the same, Fanshawe is usually lively and attractive, and gives the rich Manueline medley of sea, battle, legend, Portuguese Empire, and ocean nymphs and gods with zest. Camoens was haunted by Portugal's past glories; glories declining, when he wrote, into decadence, dullness and the religious bigotry which was, with imported negroes, to be the nemesis of our ancient ally. As Dr. Bowra points out, literary epic has usually flourished not in the heyday of nations or causes but in their decline. The heyday produces drama, poetry, living human stories; epic looks backward to greatness past. One might, developing this, see epic as the swelling up of a defence against actuality, a billowing of dreams, legends, mythical history, huge symbolic figures stalking through mists, larger and vaguer than life, Brocken-spectres of the soul of man. (Will epic-making perhaps be the next German industry?) Virgil looked back to Rome's eager youth; Camoens to Portugal's great past; Tasso to a crusading Christian chivalry that he would fain revive, and to a glorious Renaissance to which he would fain escape from the puritan pieties of the Counter-Reformation; Milton to man's lost Eden and his party's lost cause. All used legend and mythology to inflate history, magic to adorn it.

In his admirable analysis of *Paradise Lost*, Dr. Bowra over-emphasises, I think, Milton's humanist-puritan tension, taking puritanism on its lowest level of proletarian fanaticism. That was not the level of the cultivated English puritan gentry, often musical, literary, scholarly, protecting art against the mob; it was not the level of Milton's puritanism, which I do not think conflicted with his humanism. Another questionable point: can *Paradise Lost* rightly be called, as Dr. Bowra calls it, a protestant epic? Milton was, of course, a tremendous protestant; as Dr. Tillyard has said, his admirers cannot get away from that; one must admit, too, that Adam, arguing theology with Raphael after dinner, wears a definitely protestant air. But the theme, the theology and the cosmology were at least twelve hundred years old; *Paradise Lost* was, in essence, a *De Originali Peccato* after Avitus and the Fathers; Cynewulf and Caedmon had written the strange tale in verse, the schoolmen in prose. Milton even takes the mediæval universe of Ptolemy for his *mise en scène*; the legend is Hebraic, Christian and Catholic, however classical the style, protestant the intellectual approach, individual the beauties.

There is not space to do justice to the scope and accomplishment of this book. To read it straight through (it should be thus read) is to be shown by a revealing interpreter a pageant of great poetry and great issues, decorated all the way with the superb, fantastic beauties and richnesses of men's minds. The imaginative analysis of each of the four great poems clarifies and enhances them, even where it may provoke argument; their juxtaposition links them into a magnificent synthesis. Sometimes the commentator's thought outruns his style, moving faster and suggesting more; it seems closer packed.

ROSE MACAULAY

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few in these days who will disagree with the historical analysis and argument with regard to the lack of democratic institutions and spirit in the Germany of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He divides his sermon into three parts. Part I states the case for freedom as it has developed in the democratic States after the French Revolution. Part II is a defence of the politician and his role in the free state. Part III deals with the important problem of the relation between the civil authority and the soldiers or armed forces under democracy. There is nothing very new in his arguments, but that does not make them the less convincing, and they are stated in a lively and terse form. Professor Brogan does not conceal the difficulties of running a free state and of maintaining both freedom and the State. But having frankly given the arguments of the critics and enemies of democracy, he usually finds the right answer. For instance, party politics has for long been the vulnerable point in the free state which the authoritarian revels in attacking. Professor Brogan admits its inconveniences and its evils. But, after the last ten years of European history, it is well to remember that there is this answer to the critics:

> A party is an organised instrument of securing consent. In a fortunate community (such as the United States has been for a great part of its history) it is hard to say in advance "consent to what," but the parties play their great national role all the same. They are training-grounds, breeding-grounds for politicians, the only alternative governing class to courtiers, policemen, soldiers, gangsters.

And one may add that even in the modern authoritarian State there are still parties, *the* Party, which is an organised instrument for imposing upon his subjects and slaves the will of the dictator, gangster, soldier and policeman.

LEONARD WOOLF

## IF IT WASN'T FOR THE HOUSES IN BETWEEN!

**Beyond the Chindwin.** By BERNARD FERGUSSON. Foreword by Field-Marshal the Viscount Wavell. *Collins.* 10s. 6d.

**Ocean Front.** *H.M. Stationery Office.* 2s.

The war isn't over, but it has sheered off. On some fronts only beginning, on others so seasoned as almost to have been forgotten, it returns in gusts and spells of better news. To the eye travelling eastwards, with Chunking or Tokyo as objective, Burma provides the first evidence of "the other war." (But it can no longer be called that.) Rangoon has fallen: this balances, in our memories, the loss of Singapore, after which many people gave up following the course of events. We are ashamed, perhaps, of having been so hazy, so indifferent; we should like to know, without giving ourselves away, rather more than the newspapers will tell us. Here is a book to begin with, an account of our first large penetration into Burma after it was overrun by the Japs. This was the Wingate Expedition across the Chindwin in February, 1943. It is not so much, the reader will find, war as preparation for war, exploration in a new military strategy. The jungle has its own discoverable laws of warfare: if the Japs could show themselves monkeys we could be bigger game of the kind that covers its tracks and travels by night. So the Expedition set out on its journey of a thousand miles behind the enemy lines. Major Fergusson tells the story of the column under his command. It made its own way, it marched interminably and in all weathers, it scented out Japs, it played for invisibility, it ran desperately short of supplies but hammered on, it got back to India with more than 65 per cent. of its personnel. However one looks at it, whether as a try-out of Wingate's theories (which many were inclined to scoff at) or as a prolonged toughening process for those who took part in it, this was a brilliant and audacious preparation for battle.

Major Fergusson describes the long trek with a devotion and a relish of under-statement inseparable for the Englishman—and the Scotsman—from such adventures. Facts speak for themselves; the 75 lb. kit with which each man started, the loss of the wireless set and rations giving out. There is a harrowing passage describing the physical and mental efforts of sugar starvation, and another on the occasion of crossing the Irrawaddy. But the general effect of Major Fergusson's narrative is to reduce extraordinary events to a jog-trot. On and on they go; the Japs have just left here, or reached there; a single cup of tea must quench a day's thirst; a new *chaung*, a new stretch of paddy comes into view; warm elephant droppings, quotations from Flecker, memories of home, news of the other columns, the country and the weather, make one day very like another. The author cautiously gives a ruling on beards, brings in religion and Trollope, and gives away very little about himself and his companions. If the Japs ever read his book they will be almost as much baffled by the character of their enemy as by the way in which a 1,000-mile path was cut under their noses. However, *Beyond the Chindwin* contrives a nice admixture of the individual and the authoritative; as it should, its author being obviously a successful and popular commanding officer. It is less informative on the subject of Wingate than one has the right to expect.

*Ocean Front* brings home the Pacific war in a series of whole-page and double-spread photographs. Not only the jungle war, but the island war, the war at sea and in the air, are spectacularly and relentlessly reproduced. There is one picture of our men landing on a shore that has been "softened up"—that is, churned to rubble with a few tree-stumps left standing—which staggers the imagination. Even the romantically minded, in the face of such pictures—this war has produced thousands of them—would be hard put to it to see war other than as it is, as the most ravaging of diseases, that rots homes, landscapes and whole countries. *Ocean Front* breaks new ground in the M.O.I.'s series of pamphlets illuminating the war. With a larger format, more illustrations and less text, it takes the eye like a headline.

G. W. STONIER

## PROFITS BEFORE PATRIOTISM

**Patents for Hitler. The Stranglehold of International Cartels.** By GUENTER REIMANN. *Gollancz.* 6s.

Hitler almost won the war by a secret weapon more powerful than V.1 or V.2. By 1936 his totalitarian State was a leading partner in 97 out of 128 of the world's most important international cartels. Year after year the Nazi interests utilised foreign patent laws, licensing arrangements, divisions of territory, etc., as part of their strategy for the Second World War. The documentary evidence of these preparations was produced at hearings before the Senate Patents Committee, the Truman Committee and other Congressional Investigating Committees; and there is much information available from the files of the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice. Guenter Reimann has concisely summarised it in a book which every student of world organisation should make it his duty to read.

It is the same old story: profits before patriotism, dividends from death, the subjection of science to the needs of war and shareholders, under a system of private enterprise which knows no national boundaries. The mysterious visits of Sir Basil Zaharoff during the last war are paralleled in World War No. 2 by the journeys of Mr. Frank A. Howard, Standard Oil's emissary, who


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met I.G. representatives at the Hague in October, 1939, after visiting London and Paris. On his return he informed Washington of the planned "sale" of two thousand I.G. patents to Standard Oil. This could hardly have remained a secret; but how far I.G.Farben and Standard Oil promised mutual assistance to each other for the preservation of their world-wide joint stake during World War No. 2 was not reported, and Mr. Howard carefully omitted any reference at that time to such items as the existence of Jasco, the main link between the two companies in the field of synthetic rubber. In a confidential letter Mr. Howard described his deal as "a *modus vivendi* which would operate through the term of the war, whether or not the United States come in."

While the Nazis conquered one country after another, Mr. Howard's arrangements worked well. I.G. was allowed to expand in conquered countries as a "private" trust. Standard Oil properties in France were transferred to I.G.Farben. In 1941 I.G. was still sending its cables to New York instructing Standard Oil concerning patent agreements with other American firms—agreements which were vitally important to the war economy of a country supplying arms to the Allies. When Hungary was already controlled by the Nazis, I.G.Farben officials in Berlin telephoned Mr. Howard in New York offering to purchase Standard Oil's plants in Hungary. An inter-office memorandum of Standard Oil, dated August 19th, 1941, stated "that, if the sale were approved by the U.S. Government in principle, then we would expect to be successful in obtaining a navicert from the British Government concerning the consignment" (gold from Lisbon). The State Department approved of the sale, but the Treasury turned it down. At this time Standard Oil was still supplying petrol to the German and Italian air lines in South America, then the only link between the Axis and the Western hemisphere. In spite of appeals to American business firms to cease trading with Latin American firms with known Axis supporters, 11 per cent. continued their activities.

When Japanese planes attacked Pearl Harbour the United States was cut off from crude-rubber supplies and not ready to start mass-production of synthetic rubber. "The decisive reason," Mr. Reimann tells us, "was the control of basic patents by I.G.Farben and Standard Oil," and quotes documents produced before the Truman Committee which prove it. The same unpreparedness in light metals production was the result of a tie-up between Magnesium Development Company and I.G.Farben, whilst the close association of Krupps with Carboloy kept up the price of cemented Tungsten carbide (for cutting steel) until after Pearl Harbour.

In the case of Plexiglas, an important plastic, the German firm Rohm and Haas A.G. had close associations with the firm of the same name in Philadelphia—the only firm in America which produces it. Even after the enactment of the Lend-Lease Bill, the German firm received reports on the sales of Plexiglas which enabled the Nazi authorities to keep up to date their information on the progress of the manufacture of equipment of military aircraft in America. Lastly, Zeiss (German) had an agreement with Bausch and Lomb for a division of markets, so that, even after the outbreak of war in Europe, "Bausch and Lomb refused to sell to Britain or to other foreign Governments, without the consent of Zeiss, instruments which could be used for military purposes." The cartel was broken only by the intervention of the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice.

Since Guenter Reimann wrote his book in 1942 many things have happened. Last August, when the Nazis knew that Germany could not win the war, a group of officials and industrialists held a secret conference at Strasbourg. There they planned to re-establish many contacts with firms abroad, especially in the U.S.A. Representatives of I.G.Farben, Krupps, etc., were informed that the export of capital would now be encouraged, and that, in return, the Nazi underground must be secretly provided with funds. This meeting shows the need for treating Hitler's industrial collaborators as war criminals. Not to do so is to encourage them to plan World War No. 3 and to leave secret nuclei of opposition and conspiracy in Germany and abroad, and to give the Nazi industrialists a chance to avoid responsibility for Hitler and his regime.

DOROTHY WOODMAN

## GRAMOPHONE NOTES

DEBUSSY: *Rondes de Printemps* and *Gigues*. San Francisco Symphony Orch., cond. Pierre Monteux (H.M.V. DB6182–3).

DEBUSSY: *Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune*. National Symphony Orch., cond. Sidney Beer (Decca K1037).

MENDELSSOHN: *Fingal's Cave*. Ditto, cond. Heinz Ungar (Decca K1120).

PONCHIELLI: *Dance of the Hours*. Ditto, cond. Anatole Fistoulari (Decca K1119).

MOZART: *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*. London Philharmonic Orch., cond. Beecham (H.M.V. DB6204–5).

WAGNER: *Overture: Rienzi*. Hallé Orch., cond. Barbirolli (H.M.V. C3425–6).

MOZART: *Clarinet Quintet*. Philharmonic String Quartet and Reginald Kell (Col. DX1187–90).

BRITTEN: *Introduction and Rondo alla Burlesca*, and

BRITTEN: *Mazurka Elegiaca*, for two pianos. Clifford Curzon and Benjamin Britten (Decca K1117–8).

J. STRAUSS: *Blue Danube*, Concett Transcription. Louis Kentner (Col. DX1184).

MOERAN: "Diaphenia" and "The Sweet o' the Year," and

R. STRAUSS: "Ständchen." Heddle Nash, acc. Gerald Moore (H.M.V. B9412).

The last of Debussy's orchestral works (except the ballet, *Jeux*, and the incidental music to D'Annunzio's *Saint Sébastien*) have always been under a cloud. This is difficult to explain, since they have all the qualities that distinguish the far more popular *Nocturnes*. There is, to be sure, a school of criticism which affects to find these *Images* (including *Ibéria*) vulgarly illustrative; but I confess myself unable to share so rarefied a view. Both *Gigues* and *Rondes* appear to me the *ne plus ultra* of musical impressionism: beautifully and sensitively scored, harmonically less mannered than much of Debussy's work, and exactly the right length. The first, originally named "Gigue Triste," is at once humorous and mysterious; the mystery proceeds from the hushed, crepuscular atmosphere, as of a nocturne by Whistler, the second from the fragments of "The Keel Row," the tune which holds the piece together. Whether Debussy was thinking of London when he wrote this extraordinary piece, I do not know; the comic little tune obviously took his fancy because of its easy adaptability to the whole-tone scale; and I think it not fanciful to call attention to various similarities between *Gigues* and the Scherzo of Vaughan Williams's *London Symphony*. What is perhaps more pertinent just now is the combination of melancholy and jollification which is the "note" of the piece: like the earlier *Fêtes*, *Gigues* paints a picture of nocturnal merry-making against an evident background of tragedy. It is an out-of-door piece and the tune is overheard, as it were, in snatches, as it weaves in and out of the streets and alleys of a city on a night of celebration. *Rondes de Printemps* is less considerable because it is less imaginative in the simplicity of its inspiration; but it evokes wonderfully the jubilance, the pale green luxuriance, the sense of liberation, which are the gifts of Spring. These two pieces might have been composed especially for VE-Day, so perfectly do they express our twy-minded condition. I cannot imagine this music better performed, and the recording is exceptionally fine. There is much—though less—to be grateful for in the new issue of *L'Après-midi d'un Faune*. The instrumental playing is outstandingly good, and it would be unfair to ignore the care which has clearly been taken to secure a perfect balance in recording this miraculous score. On the whole it is remarkably successful, though on the faint side: I could not hear the violin harmonics or the (most important) glockenspiel at the end. And surely it would have been more artistic to make the turn-over at the end of the bar preceding the D flat section, instead of allowing the orchestra to collapse tentatively into the chord—a method to which I thought we had said good-bye many years ago.

Dr. Ungar's performance of the *Hebrides Overture* is frankly disappointing: cautious and devitalised, it never for a moment makes us hear the surge of the northern Atlantic, or see the spume fountaining up from the rocks. Ponchielli's charming diversion fares much better: this is not important music, but it sets a high standard in self-confident opulence. In a finely sustained performance John Barbirolli does everything that can be done to devulgarise the Overture to that appalling opera, *Rienzi*. He (rightly, I believe) emphasises Wagner's debt to Spontini, rather than to Meyerbeer, and the odd echoes of Beethoven which occur in the first sections of the overture. But the Scherzo from Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, which fills up the fourth side of this set, alone makes it worth acquiring.

The latest recording of Mozart's most famous Serenade does not seem to me to be among Sir Thomas Beecham's most happy interpretations of that composer. To be sure it sparkles delightfully; but the violin tone has a nasty edge, the Finale is meaninglessly slow, and the whole performance is behind what is needed to re-sharpen our interest in this hackneyed piece. How different both the recording and playing of the *Clarinet Quintet!* This is, if I do not mistake, the first example to be put on the market of the new, "stereoscopic" method of recording (whatever that may mean: a technical mystery is involved). The result is astounding—a balance of sonority more subtle, especially where the outer registers are concerned, than I have ever heard before on a gramophone. The tone is throughout beautifully mellow, even in the double fortes, and the general absence of subsidiary noises, of distortion, etc., brings this issue very near indeed to perfection.

Benjamin Britten's pieces for two pianos were composed some years ago and differ sharply one from the other. The first is an essay in the baroque—a style to which this composer has less natural affinity than any other of which I can immediately think. The result is very accomplished, most effectively laid out for the instruments, and full of interesting contrasts of sonority. But it is all rather cold and empty. The *Mazurka*, on the other hand, is a most moving and deeply felt piece of music. Composed as a homage to Paderewski, it has the melodic simplicity, the subtle originality, and the clear, logical harmony characteristic of Britten's best music. Though in some sense a virtuoso piece, this Mazurka has qualities of which one would not quickly tire. Fond though I am of virtuosity, I must admit that I find the concert transcription of *Blue Danube* rather too much of a good thing. It is relentlessly noisy and over-decorated; even Mr. Kentner's technique cannot give point to such a tawdry exhibition of stale fireworks.

The two songs by E. J. Moeran show this uneven composer at his best. They are fluent, melodious and beautifully sung. But surely the Strauss *Ständchen* is too thoroughly German in conception to stand being sung in English.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

In V. S. Pritchett's London Diary last week the title of Mr. Stephen Spender's book on Civil Defence workers was wrongly given: it should be *Citizens in War—and After* (published by Messrs Harrap).

# Week-end Competitions

## No. 800

**Set by Adrian Frere**

In the new "forties" quest for frivolity, scent will come back into use. Prizes of six guineas are offered for a set of six new French names for scents, not necessarily of one word, with English equivalents. Marks for suitable names and wit in transpotion. Examples: *Frigidité*—"Marriage of true minds," or *Brutale*—"Unkindness." Entries by June 5.

## RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 797

**Set by G. W. Stonier**

Competitors are invited to submit three quotations for a day in the calendar. They may choose which day they like, and the three quotations, in verse or prose, should fit the day. Limit, 200 words.

**Report by G. W. Stonier**

Many delightful quotations, and misapplied quotations, have showered in, though comparatively few days in the year were picked. I liked these:

*Valentine's Day*

Apollo has peeped through the shutter,
And awaken'd the witty and fair;
The boarding-school belle's in a flutter,
The twopenny post's in despair;
The breath of the morning is flinging
A magic on blossom, on spray,
And cockneys and sparrows are singing
In chorus on VALENTINE'S DAY.

Praed (T. ARTHUR JONES)

*The First Wednesday in June*

For most men (till by losing rendered sager)
Will back their own opinions by a wager.

—*Beppo* (Byron) (LESLIE JOHNSON)

*November 1st. All Saints' Day. Fox-hunting Begins*

The unspeakable in pursuit of the uneatable.

—Oscar Wilde ("CHARON")

*July 15th. St. Swithin's Day*

". . . sure, the reverent eye must see
A Purpose in Liquidity."

—*Heaven*, Rupert Brooke (DOUGLAS HAWSON)

*December 26th*

"I knew it," said the Ox, "because
There was a light about His head."
"I knew it," said the Ass, "there was
An Angel with his wings outspread":
"I knew it," said the Dog, "a bird
Cast a strange shadow on the wall."
But the wise Sheep said not a word,
Although she knew the first of all.

E. S. B. (MRS. FRANK JEWSON)

Most competitors plumped for VE-Day. Christmas came next, then Good Friday, August Bank Holiday, and April 1st. The "mixed" bundle, half serious and half laughing, was less frequent than I had hoped, and more might have been made of the 350 odd other days outside the well-known ones. The winners, however, show plenty of variety. They are Granville Garley, Ralph Ekley, J. R. Till, and R. C. Horwood.

PRIZES

*October 31st. Hallow-e'en*

(On this day witches and fairies too are all let loose, and hobgoblins of every sort roam freely about)

"When I went to bed last night I fancied that something ran in at my bedroom door after me from the gallery. It seemed to be a skeleton. It ran with a dancing step, and I thought it aimed a blow at me from behind. This was shortly before midnight."

(The Reverend Francis Kilvert, from his *Diary*)

"And in that garden, black and white,
Creep whispers through the grass all night:
And spectral dance, before the dawn,
A hundred Vicars down the lawn;
Curates, long dust, will come and go
On lissom, clerical, printless toe;
And oft between the boughs is seen
The sly shade of a Rural Dean. . . ."

(Rupert Brooke, from *The Old Vicarage, Grantchester*)

"Anno 1670, not far from Cirencester, was an Apparition; Being demanded, whether a good Spirit, or a bad? Returned no answer, but disappeared with a curious Perfume and most melodious Twang."

(John Aubrey, from his *Miscellanies*)

GRANVILLE GARLEY

*Good Friday*

"See, see, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!" (Marlowe's *Faustus*).

"Who sees God's face, that is selfe life, must dye;
What death were it then to see God dye?
It made his owne Lieutenant Nature shrinke,
It made his footstoole crack, and the Sunne winke.
Could I behold those hands which span the Poles,
And turn all spheares at once, peirc'd with those holes?
Could I behold that endlesse height which is
Zenith to us, and our Antipodes,
Humbled below us? or that blood which is
The seat of all our Soules, if not of his,
Made durt of dust, or that flesh which was worne
By God, for his apparell, rag'd and torne?"

(Donne: *Goodfriday* 1613. *Riding Westward*)

Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it.

Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; let a cloud dwell upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify it.

(*Book of Job*, Ch. 3, vs. 4–5)

RALPH EKLEY

*Mothering Sunday*

"Mum's the word."

(George Colman, *Battle of Hexham*, Act II, Sc. I)

"'Tis a thing impossible to frame Conceptions equal to the soul's desires."

(Wordsworth, *The Excursion*, Book IV, lines 136–7)

"'Oh, your pore, pore ma!' said Ellen. 'She was always so very fond of you, Master Ernest: you was always her favourite; I can't abear to think of anything between you and her. To think now of the way she used to have me into the dining-room and teach me my catechism, that she did! Oh, Master Ernest, you really must go and make it all up with her; indeed you must.'"

(Samuel Butler, *The Way of All Flesh*, Chapter 71)

J. R. TILL

*April 20th (Hitler's Birthday)*

Let the day perish wherein I was born,
And the night which said, There is a man child conceived.
Let that day be darkness;
Let not God regard it from above,
Neither let the light shine upon it.
Let darkness and the shadow of death claim it for their own;
Let a cloud dwell upon it;
Let all that maketh black the day terrify it,
As for that night, let thick darkness seize upon it;
Let it not rejoice among the days of the year;
Let it not come into the number of the months.

*Job* III, 3

He was brave without a doubt; so are wolves; there are even monkeys as fierce as tigers. From being a fanatic he became an adroit politician, that is to say, from a wolf he became a fox, climbed by imposture from the first steps where the infuriated enthusiasm of the times had placed him, right to the pinnacle of greatness; and the impostor walked on the heads of the prostrated fanatics. He reigned, but he lived in the horrors of anxiety; he knew neither serene days nor tranquil nights. The consolations of friendship never approached him; he died before his time.

—Voltaire on *Cromwell*

If he be not born to be hanged, our case is miserable.

—*The Tempest*, Act I, Scene I

R. C. HORWOOD


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